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Practical Studies of the Faith

By

Clarence E. Macartney

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By CLARENCE E. MACARTNEY

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Sons of Thunder

PULPIT POWER OF THE PAST

By

CLARENCE EDWARD MACARTNEY, D.D.

Author of "Paul the Man," "Putting on Immortality," etc.

NEW YORK CHICAGO

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To
Wilhelmina

INTRODUCTION

IT gives me pleasure to accede to the author's request to write a brief introductory note for this volume. I have not seen the text of the book, but my recollection of the general content and of the characteristically impressive and engaging style of these addresses, when they were delivered as the L. P. Stone Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary, in November, 1928, is vivid enough to warrant a recourse to memory for a few reflections pertinent to the publication of this valuable series of biographical and homiletic studies.

The extraordinary popularity that marked the delivery of these lectures from the beginning to the end—the five as originally given are here expanded to ten chapters—will occasion no surprise to those familiar with Dr. Macartney's notable career as a preacher, first at Paterson, N. J., then at Philadelphia, and now in the historic pulpit of First Church, Pittsburgh, or to those who have been observing the wide recognition accorded to the many volumes he has been publishing in recent years. Two of these in particular, *Of Them He Chose Twelve,* and *Paul the Man,* have a sort of natural kinship with the *Sons of Thunder,* these moral and religious heroes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who are here seen taking their proper and

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honourable places in the great evangelical succession, headed by the original apostles.

It is a quite varied gallery of portraits to which the author introduces us in these pages: John Bunyan, Thomas Guthrie, Thomas Chalmers, Edward Irving, and—to mention only the leading American representatives in the series—James Waddel, Gilbert Tennent, Samuel Davies, Peter Cartwright, Eliphalet Nott and Lyman Beecher. The treatment of some of the subjects, owing to the limited time available, was rather too compressed to permit a full survey of the biographical data, or an elaborate discussion of the special movements and issues, with which some of these leaders were connected. But while some phases of a subject were thus presented only in brief outline, yet even these sketches were highly suggestive and most stimulating, and the course, as a whole, was admirably fitted, by the skilful combination of instructive and inspirational elements, to realize the speaker's main purpose, that of quickening the interest of his hearers —most of them students for the ministry—in the life and work of some of the most gifted and influential representatives of the modern pulpit.

With adequate resources of historical knowledge; shrewd and penetrating in his analysis of character; able to enter sympathetically into the most diverse types of Christian life and effort; generous in his appreciation of merit and judicious in his criticisms of faults and defects; with a keen eye, alike for the dramatic features and for the abiding human interest of the stories he reproduces; quick in fancy and, ever

and again, indulging in sustained flights of imagination; abounding in touches of humour, pathos, and irony; always concerned to bring out strongly the moral and spiritual values in the words and labours of these ministers of the Gospel; orderly in method, racy, and often extremely vivid in description; master of a style of real simplicity, strength, and beauty, that occasionally rises to the emotional intensity of genuine eloquence—Dr. Macartney not only makes these "great men" of a bygone day stand before us in unmistakable lifelikeness, but also warms our hearts with admiration for their excellencies, and with a new sense of the glory of the cause for which they pleaded and for which they spent their lives in sacrificial devotion.

We have no doubt that the thrilling interest, which the delivery of these lectures awakened in those who heard them, will find sympathetic vibration and grateful response in the minds and hearts of many who will be delighted to read them, in the form in which they are now given to the public.

FREDERICK W. LOETSCHER.

The Theological Seminary,
Princeton, N. J.

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I

JOHN BUNYAN

BY THE GRACE OF GOD, PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL

LEAVING the noisy and ill-smelling street in a now rather shabby part of the city, one enters by an ancient iron gateway into Bunhill Fields, one of London's most famous burial grounds. Venerable trees with their outstretched arms cast their shadows across the closely crowded tombs of the dead. On the benches along the paths, poor and decayed old men, more welcome among the dead than the living, sit and chat amiably together, undisturbed by their gloomy surroundings. Passing down one of these narrow lanes between the graves, the visitor surveys a dismal harvest of the trophies and tokens of mortality. But, here and there, the eye lights upon a name which can never die. Here, on this stone, he reads the name, Susannah Wesley, the great mother of the Wesleys; and here on another tomb the name Isaac Watts, and as he looks he seems to hear the melody of the poet's grand hymn, "*When I Survey the Wondrous Cross.*" And over here is the grave of Daniel Defoe, author of *Robinson Crusoe,* one of the two most popular books in the English tongue. And not far off is another famous grave. Before the visitor can make out the name carved upon it, the sculptured

relief of a Pilgrim kneeling at the foot of the Cross, while his bundle rolls from his back, tells him that he is standing by the grave of the author of the other best known English book, *Pilgrim's Progress*.

John Bunyan was born in November, 1628, near Elstow, a hamlet not far from Bedford. When Bunyan was born, Richard Baxter was thirteen years of age, George Fox, the founder of the Friends, was four; Cromwell was twenty-eight, going up to take his seat in Parliament; John Milton was twenty, beginning to dream of writing poetry " such as the world would not willingly let die;" Shakespeare had been sleeping for twelve years beneath the stone in the church on the banks of quiet Avon; the New England Colony had passed through the storms and trials of eight winters; Charles I was on the throne of England, and on the political horizon some could discern a cloud no bigger than a man's hand, but a cloud which was to grow and swell in dimension and blackness, until it broke over England in the storm of the Civil War.

Bunyan's father, like himself, was a tinker. " My father's house," he says, " being of that rank that is the meanest and most despised of all the families in the land." Yet he rejoices that by this humble door God brought him into the world to partake of the grace in life that is in Christ by the Gospel. Although he was of the meanest rank, the father of Bunyan saw to it that his son learned to read and write and sent him to the grammar school. When visiting Elstow, in July, 1928, I was struck with the unfamiliarity of the church sexton with the history of the church whose

attendant he was. But he explained his inability to answer my questions, by telling me that he could neither read nor write. This was in England, in July, 1928! But three hundred years before, the son of a poor tinker was sent to the grammar school and learned to read and write. What the world would have missed, had John Bunyan's father not sent him to school, to learn to read and to write!

For the story of Bunyan's boyhood and youth, his conversion, his early preaching, and the first part of his prison experience, we must depend upon his own *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners,* a work written in prison, and one of the most remarkable autobiographies and confessions ever penned. In this book, wherein he unveils and reveals the inmost of his soul, Bunyan describes himself in childhood and youth as a great sinner. It has been a fashion with his biographers to say that, as in the case of Augustine and his *Confessions,* we must not take these self-condemnations too literally, but as the exaggerated expressions of a mind which has come to know the Lord and regrets the days of ignorance and unbelief. Macaulay even goes the length of saying, " It is quite certain that Bunyan was, at eighteen years, what in any but the most austerely puritanical circles, would have been considered as a young man of singular gravity and innocence." But there are those who will still prefer to take Bunyan at his word when he said that he was " filled with all unrighteousness, both in my heart and life, and that, from a child, I had but few equals both for cursing, swearing, lying and blaspheming the holy

name of God." He intimates very plainly that had it not been for the miracle of his conversion, he would not only have perished by the stroke of eternal justice, but would have suffered the righteous judgments of this world. In one of his sermons he makes the confession that he was not only a sinner himself, but a great sin-breeder: "I infected all the youths of the town where I was born, with all manner of youthful vanity."

In an age when no one doubted the existence of heaven and hell, devils and angels, this boy of tremendous imagination had anxious and troubled nights, with apprehensions of devils, evil spirits, and thoughts of the fearful torments of hell-fire. So much was this so, that he tells us that, even as a boy, he wished either that there had been no hell or that he had been a devil, so that if he must go to hell, he might be rather a tormentor than tormented himself. He had three narrow escapes from death—twice from drowning and once from the bite of an adder. But these incidents did nothing to awaken his soul to righteousness. It is in connection with this that Bunyan makes a casual mention of his experience in the Civil War, an experience which he dismisses with a single sentence:

> When I was a soldier, I, with others, was drawn to such a place to besiege it, but when I was just ready to go, one of the company desired to go in my room; to which, when I consented, he took my place, and coming to the siege as he stood sentinel, he was shot in the head with a musket bullet and died.

That is all Bunyan has to say about the Civil War.

He does not even tell us on what side he fought, although it has been generally supposed that he fought in the Parliamentary Army, and that the siege to which he referred, was the siege of Leicester. This is the view taken by Kipling in his stirring verses, *The Holy War,* written during the World War:

A tinker out of Bedford,
A vagrant oft in quod,
A private under Fairfax,
A minister of God—
Two hundred years and thirty
Ere Armageddon came
His single hand portrayed it,
And Bunyan was his name!

We would give a great deal to have from Bunyan's pen, so apt to describe battles and sieges and councils, an account of some of the battles and personalities of the Civil War. Was he at Naseby, or Marston Moor? Did he see Cromwell, or Fairfax, or Monk, or Prince Rupert? But not a word does he tell us, save to relate his own, and to him, providential, escape from death. The war in which he was interested was not England's Civil War and the struggle between Crown and Parliament, but the civil war within the heart of man where heaven and hell contend for the mastery of the soul. He could say with another and a greater spiritual gladiator, "*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*"

When he returned from the war, at about the age of

seventeen or eighteen, Bunyan married a girl whom he described as "poor as poor might be." He says they came together "not having so much household stuff as a dish or spoon betwixt them." But this girl-bride brought with her two books, *The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven* and *The Practice of Piety*. Out of these two books she was wont to read to her tinker husband, wherein he says, "I found some things that were somewhat pleasing to me." His marriage and the reading of these books begat within him a desire to reform his vicious life, and he fell in very easily with church-going and had a great and almost superstitious reverence for the priest and the clerk at the church. But all the while his heart was at enmity with God.

One Sunday, the Elstow parson preached on the evils of Sabbath-breaking. Bunyan felt that the sermon was directed toward him, for this was a vice, he confesses, "in which I did solace myself." He went home "greatly loaded" with the sermon; but when his dinner was over, he felt better and returned to the green to play one-o'-cat with his companions. He had struck one blow from the hole, and was just about to strike the second time, when suddenly he heard a voice from heaven which said, "Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?" It seemed to him that the Lord Jesus was looking down upon him and "hotly displeased" with him. He hesitated for a little, and then in despair concluded that he "had as good be damned for many sins as for few," and went on with his sport, his only fear being that he should die before he could get his

fill of sin. Yet that voice left a disturbing echo in the youth's mind.

Not long after this incident on the green, he was sitting on a bench outside of a neighbour's shop window, "cursing and swearing and playing the madman after my wonted manner." Within the window was a very loose and ungodly woman, who, shocked at his profanity, expostulated with him and told him that his words made her to tremble. This reproof silenced and sobered him, and from that time forward, he was able to leave off swearing. This rebuke was followed by a talk with "one poor man who made profession of religion and who talked pleasantly of the Scripture." This led Bunyan to the reading of the Bible. He says that he took great pleasure in reading the historical parts, but as for St. Paul's Epistles and such like Scriptures, "I could not away with them." His confessions give every indication of a sincere desire on his part to lead a moral and religious life, yet he says of himself, that he was "nothing but a poor, painted hypocrite, who loved to be talked of as one that was truly godly." It was a year before he could give up his dancing, and it was only after a hard battle that he could relinquish the pleasure of bell-ringing. At first, he would go to the steeple-house and look on while others rang the bell. Then he began to think, "How, if one of the bells should fall?" This led him to take his stand under a main beam, thinking that, if the bell fell, he would be safe there. Then he thought to himself, "What if the bell first hit the wall, and then rebounded upon me?" This made him move to

the steeple-door. But then it came into his head, "What if the steeple itself should fall?" and with that he fled. We are at a loss to know just why Bunyan so reproached himself with bell-ringing, unless because it were done out of season. His fondness for the music of bells comes out in the last page of *Pilgrim's Progress,* where we have a sweet echo of Elstow's melodious bells, for as Hopeful and Christian came up out of the river, "they had the city itself in view, and they thought they heard all the bells therein to ring, to welcome them thereto."

The next step in his spiritual illumination was hearing three or four poor women sitting at a door in the sun, talking about the things of God. Their talk was of the new birth, of the work of God in their hearts, and how they were comforted and refreshed by the love of Christ. As he went about his employment, mending the pots and pans of the neighbourhood, "their talk and discourse went with him." He felt that they were happy and that he was wretched. Although groping in the darkness, he puts himself on record as thanking God that he was kept free from the abominations and impurities of those who were spoken of as "Ranters." "This," he says, "was all the more wonderful because these temptations were suitable to my flesh, I being but a young man, and my nature in its prime. But God who had, as I hoped, designed me for better things, kept me in the fear of His name, and did not suffer me to accept such cursed principles.

In his anxiety to know whether or not he had faith,

he was tempted to work a miracle, and, one day, between Elstow and Bedford, he was about to say to the puddles that were in the horse-path, "Be dry," and to the dry places, "Be you puddles." If he had faith, he ought to be able to work miracles. But just as he was about to speak, this thought came into his mind, "Go under yonder hedge, and pray, first, that God would make you able." When he had prayed, he concluded that he had better not try the experiment, because if he failed, he would have to look upon himself as a castaway. "Nay," thought I, "if it be so, I will not try yet, but will stay a little longer." This incident reminds one of what Rousseau tells us in his *Confessions* about his anxiety concerning election. He determined to decide the matter as to whether or not he was of the elect, by throwing an apple at a tree. If he missed, he was doomed to be lost. If he hit the tree, he was of the elect. He tells us that he hit the tree, but confesses that he had chosen a tree of considerable diameter.

After his talk with the poor women sitting in a door in the sun, Bunyan had a dream, a vision, in which he saw these poor people sitting on the sunny side of a high mountain, refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while he was shivering and shrinking in the cold. Betwixt himself and them he saw a wall that was encompassed about the mountain, and through this wall his soul greatly desired to pass, concluding that, if he could, he would go even into the very midst of them, and there also comfort himself with the heat of their sun. By a great effort and a

" sideling striving," he contrived to get his shoulders and body through and was comforted by the light of the sun. He concludes that the mountain signified the Church of the living God, and the sun that shone thereon, the comfortable shining of His merciful face on them that were in; the wall he took to be that which separated Christians and the world, and the gap, which was in the wall, to be Jesus Christ. None could enter into life but those that were in downright earnest, and unless, also, they left that wicked world behind them, " for here was only room for body and soul, but not for body and soul and sin." In this passage we hear sounding the first note of that music, which was to thrill and charm the world in *Pilgrim's Progress.*

Just when he was beginning to take some comfort and hope, the tempter began to assail him with doubts as to the Scriptures: " How can you tell but that the Turks had as good scriptures to prove their Mahomet the Saviour as we have to prove our Jesus? And could I think, that so many ten thousands in so many countries and kingdoms, should be without the knowledge of the right way to heaven (if there were indeed a heaven), and that we only, who live in a corner of the earth, should alone be blessed therewith? Everyone doth think his own religion rightest, both Jews and Moors, and Pagans; and how if all our faith, and Christ, and Scriptures, should be but a think so, too? " After all, doubt in the seventeenth century was much the same as doubt is in the twentieth, the tenth or was in the first century.

But the hardest battle which Bunyan had to fight, was a battle with the temptation "to sell Christ." For the space of a year this temptation followed him continually, so that he was not rid of it a day or a month, sometimes, not an hour in the day, unless he were asleep. The tempter would say to him, "Sell Him; sell Him; sell Him," and he would answer, "I will not; I will not; I will not—no, not for a thousand, thousand, thousands of worlds." But one morning, fiercely assaulted by this temptation, and after he had answered many times, "No, no, not for thousands of worlds," at least as many as "twenty times," wearied with the battle, he said, "Let Him go if He will. And down fell I, as a bird that is shot from the top of a tree, into great guilt and fearful despair." Getting out of his bed he went moping into the field like a man bereft of life. In his desperation he began to compare his sin first with the sin of David, whose adultery and murder were heinous crimes. But these sins were against the law of Moses from which the Lord Christ could deliver him. But his were against the Gospel, against the Mediator thereof—he had sold his Saviour. Then he compared his sin with the sin of Peter—sin which came nighest to his own, for he had denied his Saviour. Yet he found no comfort in this comparison, for he considered that Peter's was but a denial of his Master, whereas his was a selling of his faith. From Peter he turned to Judas, feeling that if his sin should differ from that of Judas by so much as the breadth of an hair, what a happy condition his soul would be in. The result was that he found Judas did his intention-

ally, whereas his was against prayer and striving, and that Judas committed his crime with much deliberation, but his was done in a fearful hurry. All the while there kept reverberating in his mind the words of the Epistle, "*That profane person, Esau, who for one morsel of meat, sold his birthright.*" Yet in his agony he would lay hold upon words like these, "*And him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out;*" or, again, "*I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.*" Finding no comfort or satisfaction in comparing his sin with those of any particular individual or saint in the Scriptures, he hit upon the plan of putting all their sins together against his alone, thinking that although his sin was greater than that of anyone, yet, if it should prove to be only equal to all their sins, there would be hopes for him. But here, too, he was doomed to disappointment. His sin was point blank against his Saviour. "Oh! methought this sin was bigger than the sins of the country, of a kingdom or of the whole world."

The breaking of the day for him was a voice which he heard as he was walking to and fro in a good man's shop, "Didst thou ever refuse to be justified by the blood of Christ?" Then he began with more hope to seek the Lord, and with strong cries to pray, "O Lord, I beseech Thee, show me that Thou hast loved me with an everlasting love." When the devil tempted him and told him that it was idle for him to pray, for his sin was unpardonable, the Scripture, "*O man, great is thy faith,*" came to him as if one had "clapped him on the back, as he was on his knees before God."

There " darted in " upon him, too, another verse, " *My grace is sufficient for thee.*" Through such a Slough of Despond as this, the poor pilgrim struggled and panted, until at length, kneeling at the Cross, and relying not upon his own efforts, but upon the righteousness of Christ, he lost the burden of his sin and saw it no more. He tells us that his final period of eclipse and darkness and gloom was ended by his hearing the words sounding in his heart, " ' I must go to Jesus.' At this my former darkness and atheism fled away and the blessed things of heaven were set within my view." Perhaps those words were still ringing in Bunyan's mind when, on an August day, 1688, at the home of Mr. Strudwick, in London, just before he breathed his last, he said, " Take me, for I come to Thee." The long struggle was ended. He was " safe in the arms of Jesus."

For a number of years after his conversion, Bunyan remained an inconspicuous member of the Baptist Meeting at Bedford. But those who had listened to him give an account in private of his religious experience, urged him to speak a word of exhortation unto them at one of their meetings. To which he says: " Though at first it did much dash and abash my spirit, yet being still by them desired and entreated, I consented to their request, and did twice at two several assemblies, but in private, though with much weakness and infirmity, discover my gift amongst them." After several experiments in this kind of exhortation, he was solemnly set aside and called forth by prayer and fasting to " a more ordinary and public preaching

of the Word." At first, he could not believe that God would speak to the heart of man by him, and yet when he saw how many were touched by what he said, and loved him for his witness, he blessed God that He had counted him an instrument to show them the way of salvation. Here was a man who had seen heaven and hell, and the crowds resorted to his preaching. With the crowds there came, too, the adversaries and the enemies. "When I first went to preach the Word abroad, the doctors and priests of the country did open wide against me; but I was persuaded of this, not to render railing for railing; but to see how many of their carnal professors I could convince of their miserable state by the law, and of the want and worth of Christ."

In the archives of the British House of Lords, there is still to be seen a petition from the parishioners of Yelden against their rector because, on a Christmas Day he had suffered "one Bunyan of Bedford, a tinker," to speak in his pulpit. What would that church at Yelden, or any church in Protestant Christendom, today, not give to hear Bunyan, the tinker, preach in its pulpit!

In his preaching, Bunyan says that the Lord led him to begin where His Word begins with sinners, that is, to condemn all flesh:

> I preached what I felt, what I smartingly did feel; even that under which my poor soul did groan and tremble to astonishment. Indeed, I have been as one sent to them from the dead; I went myself in chains, to preach to them in chains; and carried that fire in my own conscience, that I persuaded them to be aware of.

For two years he preached in this way, crying out against men's sins. Then he tells us he altered in his preaching, for Christ did give him many "sweet discoveries of His blessed grace." He still preached, he says, what he saw and felt, but now did much labour to "hold forth Jesus Christ in all His offices, relations, and benefits unto the world, and did strive also to discover, to condemn, and remove those false supports and props on which the world doth lean, and by them fall and perish."

This "preacher of the Gospel of His dear Son," by the grace of God, confesses to sore temptation in the early days of his preaching. Sometimes he was subject to great discouragement, fearing that he would not be able to speak a word to edification. At other times, strange faintness, strengthlessness, seized upon his body so that his legs could scarce carry him to the place of preaching. Again, as he was in the midst of his sermon, he would be violently assaulted with thoughts of blasphemy, and tempted to utter them before the congregation. At other times, when he had begun to speak with clearness and liberty, he became so confused and blinded and straitened in speech, "as if my head had been in a bag all the time of my exercise." Most of all, he felt the temptation, which has come to so many preachers, to avoid certain texts because the sermon preached on them condemned the preacher also. "I thank the Lord, I have been kept from consenting to these so horrid suggestions, and have, rather as Samson, bowed myself with all my might, to condemn sin and transgression wherever I

found it. 'Let me die,' thought I, 'with the Philistines, rather than deal corruptly with the blessed Word of God.'"

In his preaching, as in his writing, Bunyan was, as Macaulay has called him, "a living concordance." Yet for the most part, his Bible exegesis is marked by a noble common sense. In the second part of *Pilgrim's Progress,* Prudence questions Matthew about the Bible.

PRUDENCE: "What do you think of the Bible?"

MATTHEW: "It is the holy word of God."

PRUDENCE: "Is there nothing written therein but what you understand?"

MATTHEW: "Yes; a great deal."

PRUDENCE: "What do you do when you meet with such places therein that you do not understand?"

MATTHEW: "I think God is wiser than I. I pray, also, that He will please to let me know all therein that He knows will be for my good."

The above dialogue is to be read on a tablet, on the walls of Canterbury Cathedral. It has a world of sense in it, and Bunyan was not unmindful of these principles in his own preaching.

Assailed by temptations from within to cease from preaching, Bunyan was also assailed from without.

But when Satan perceived that his thus tempting and assaulting me, would not answer his design; to wit, to overthrow the ministry, and make it ineffectual, as to the ends thereof; then he tried another way, which was, to stir up the minds of the ignorant and malicious to load me with slanders and reproaches: now, therefore, I may say, that what the devil could devise, and his instruments invent, was

whirled up and down the country against me, thinking, as I said, that by that means they should make my ministry to be abandoned. It began therefore to be rumoured up and down among the people, that I was a witch, a jesuit, a highwayman, and the like. But that which was reported with the boldest confidence, was that I had my misses, my whores, my bastards, yea, two wives at once, and the like.

All these slanders, Bunyan lived down by the purity of his life. He gloried in them as

Cast upon me by the devil and his seed. . . . And should I not be dealt with thus wickedly by the world, I should want one sign of a saint, and a child of God. "*Blessed are ye when men shall revile and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.*" So then, what shall I say to those who have thus bespattered me? Shall I threaten them? Shall I chide them? Shall I flatter them? Shall I entreat them to hold their tongues? No, not I. Were it not for that these things make them ripe for damnation that are the authors and abettors, I would say unto them, " Report it," because it will increase my glory. Therefore I bind these lies and slanders to me as an ornament. I rejoice in reproaches for Christ's sake.

The most serious attack on Bunyan was in connection with a country maiden, Agnes Beaumont, in 1674. A suit was made to this maiden by a local lawyer named Farry. But as he was a man of the world, Bunyan opposed the match. This aroused the enmity and stirred the vengeance of Farry. The disappointed father, also, forbade Agnes going to the Bedford Meeting. On a winter day, Bunyan, passing Agnes on the road, took her up to ride behind him on the way to a

preaching service. This was observed by those who were eager to bring a " railing accusation " against him. The girl was refused admittance to her home by her angry father, and spent the night in an outhouse. The same night, her father was taken with a sudden illness, and died before help could reach him. At once ugly rumours were abroad that the girl had poisoned her father, and had been instigated to do it by Bunyan. This report threatened the girl with a terrible fate, and involved the good name of Bunyan, his family, and his congregation. But at the coroner's inquest, the evidence showed that Beaumont had died from natural causes, and that there was no ground for the charge against the young woman. Such were some of the trials through which this great preacher had to pass.

The printed sermons of Bunyan, which have come down to us, have the terrible prolixity and endless Scriptural citation which marked the sermons of the Puritan preachers. Some of them are nothing short of a theological treatise and must have been greatly enlarged after their delivery. But if in some of his sermons, he seems to sound only the note of doom and condemnation, in others he is the earnest ambassador for Christ, and sounds the note of hope and welcome. This we hear in his sermon, *Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ.* In the conclusion of that sermon he speaks of heavenly things as a troubadour for Christ:

Art thou coming? This is also by the virtue of illumination. Art thou coming? This is because God has inclined thine heart to come. Art thou coming to Jesus Christ? It

is God that giveth thee power. Coming sinner, hast thou not now and then a kiss of the sweet lips of Jesus Christ, I mean some blessed word dropping like a honey-comb upon thy soul to revive thee, when thou art in the midst of thy dumps? Does not Jesus Christ sometimes give thee a glimpse of Himself, though perhaps thou seest Him not so long a time as while one may tell twenty? Hast thou not sometimes as it were the very warmth of His wings overshadowing the face of thy soul, that gives thee as it were a gload upon thy spirit, as the bright beams of the sun do upon thy body, when it suddenly breaks out of a cloud, though presently all is gone away!

At times Bunyan could command a very lofty style as in his introduction to the *Life and Death of Mr. Badman:*

For that wickedness like a flood is like to drown our English world; it begins already to be above the tops of the mountains; it has almost swallowed up all; our youth, our middle age, old age, and all, are almost carried away of this flood. O debauchery, debauchery, what hast thou done in England! Thou hast corrupted our young men, hast made matrons bawds; thou hast made our earth to reel to and fro like a drunkard; it is in danger to be removed like a cottage; yea, it is, because transgression is so heavy upon it, like to *fall and rise no more.* O! that I could mourn for England, and for the sins committed therein.

This passage reminds the reader of some of the passages of Sir Walter Raleigh, notably, his celebrated *Apostrophe to Death.*

An early account of Bunyan describes him in countenance as of a stern and rough temper; in conversation, mild and affable.

He had a sharp quick eye, accompanied with an excellent discerning of persons. As for his person, he was tall of stature, strong boned, though not corpulent, somewhat of a ruddy face, with sparkling eyes, wearing his hair on his upper lip, after the old British fashion; his hair reddish, but in his latter days, time had sprinkled it with grey; his nose well set, but not declining or bending, and his mouth moderately large; his forehead something high, and his habit always plain and modest.

One of Bunyan's great contemporaries was Dr. John Owen, who at first consented to write an introduction to Bunyan's pamphlet on *Differences about Water Baptism*. He was afterwards persuaded to withdraw his endorsement; for which Bunyan was not sorry, saying, "perhaps it was more for the glory of God that truth should go naked into the world than as seconded by so mighty an armour-bearer as he." This same Owen frequently heard Bunyan preach when he came to London, notably at Pinner's Hall, where Bunyan, Owen, Bates, Collins, Jenkyn, Manton, and Baxter were the preachers. When Charles II. once rallied Owen on going to hear an ignorant tinker preach, Owen replied that he would gladly give up all his power and learning for that "tinker's power of preaching."

Above all else, Bunyan possessed the crowning grace and virtue of the preacher, a burning desire to help and save those who heard him.

When I have been preaching, I thank God my heart hath often all the time of this and the other exercise, with great earnestness cried to God, that He would make the word

effectual to the salvation of the soul; still being grieved lest the enemy should take the word away from the conscience, and so it should become unfruitful; wherefore I should labour so to speak the word, as that thereby, if it were possible, the sin and person guilty might be particularized by it. Oh! that they who have heard me speak this day, did but see as I do, what sin, death, hell and the curse of God is; and also what the grace, and love, and mercy of God is, through Christ. And, indeed, I did often say in my heart before the Lord, " That if to be hanged up presently before their eyes, would be a means to awaken them, and confirm them in the truth, I gladly should be contented. . . . If any of those who are awakened by my ministry did after that fall back (as sometimes too many did), I can truly say, their loss hath been more to me than if my own children, begotten of my own body, had been going to the grave. Oh these words! ' He that converteth a sinner from the error of his way doth save a soul from death.' "

In 1660, political Puritanism had fallen, Cromwell was dead, and Charles the Second ascended the throne of England. One of the first acts of the Restoration was the revival of an act of Elizabeth's reign suppressing Nonconformist worship, and forbidding preaching, other than that of the Established clergy. The Bedford Baptists refused to obey the edict, and the most conspicuous of their martyrs was John Bunyan. Of his arrest and imprisonment, Bunyan says:

When, by the good hand of my God, I had for five or six years together, without any great interruption, freely preached the blessed Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; the devil, that old enemy of man's salvation, took his opportunity to inflame the hearts of his vassals against me, inso-

much that, at the last I was laid out for, by the warrant of a justice, and was taken and committed to prison.

Bunyan was arrested on the twelfth of November, 1660, at a Bedfordshire farmhouse, just as he was about to preach to the gathered congregation. He tells us that, had he been so minded, he could have escaped arrest, for he received a warning that the officers were on his trail. He could have escaped prison, and at any time could have been released from his imprisonment, had he promised that he would not publicly preach and address the people. This he would not do, and although never formally convicted, he lay in prison for twelve years.

Bunyan gives a graphic account of his interviews with constables, justices, clerks, and others, clergy and laymen, who volunteered to appear against him. A Dr. Lindale taunted him, saying that there was a certain Alexander, a coppersmith, who did much oppose and disturb the apostle, "aiming," says Bunyan, "at me because I was a tinker." To all questionings, Bunyan answered briefly, and to the point.

No one today regrets the injustice of Bunyan's judges or that he languished twelve years in the prison, for, as he put it, in one of his prison meditations:

God sometimes visits prisoners more
Than lordly palaces,
He often knocketh at the door,
When He their houses miss.

But it must not be thought that Bunyan's imprison-

ment was an easy cross for him to bear. He tells us that he fortified himself with the Scriptures, and that never in all his life did he have "so great an inlet to the Word of God as now. Those Scriptures that I saw nothing in before are made in this place and state to shine upon me—I have had sweet sights of the forgiveness of my sins in this place and of my being with Jesus in another world." Yet there were times when his resolution was all but shaken, especially when he thought of the sufferings which must come upon his family.

> I had often brought to my mind the hardships, miseries, and wants that my poor family was likewise to meet with; especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer my heart than all I had beside. Oh! the thoughts of the hardships I thought my blind one might go under, would break my heart to pieces. Poor child, thought I, what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! Thou must be beaten, must beg, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow upon thee.

From this trial of his resolution he was delivered by the consideration—"that if I should now venture all for God, I engage God to take care of my concern."

Towards the end of his imprisonment, Bunyan wrote a glorious paragraph on his obedience to conscience and his witness to truth:

> Indeed, my principles are such as lead me to a denial to communicate in the things in the kingdom of Christ with the ungodly and openly profane. Neither can I, in or by,

the superstitious inventions of this world consent that my soul should be governed in any of my approaches to God. But if nothing will do, unless I make of my conscience a continual butchery and slaughtershop, unless putting out my own eyes, I commit me to the blind to lead me, as I doubt is desired by some, I have determined the Almighty God being my help and shield yet to suffer if frail life might continue so long, even till the moss shall grow on my eyebrows rather than thus to violate my faith and principles.

Bunyan emerged from Bedford jail a national figure, and the books he had written, during the twelve years he had spent there, were widely read by the common people of England. From the time of his release, in 1672, until his death, in 1688, he pursued his calling as a preacher, pastor and author. Wherever he appeared, crowds came to see and to hear him. The closing chapter of his life was a worthy conclusion to the work of one who thought of himself as an ambassador of the Gospel of reconciliation. In August, 1688, he undertook a journey on horseback from Bedford to Reading, in the hope of reconciling an estranged father and son. He succeeded in the effort, but paid for it with his life. Riding from Reading to London he was overtaken on the road by a storm, and, drenched and chilled, reached the home of Mr. Strudwick, one of his London friends, on Snow Hill. He preached in White Chapel on the following Sunday; but he had received his death blow. On Tuesday he took to his bed and never left it again. He died on August 31, 1688, and was buried in Bunhill Fields. We like to think of him as following his own Pilgrim down into the dark river, and up the steep slope on the other side, and

through the gates into the City, where "he heard all the bells therein to welcome him thereto." "And many Puritans, to whom the respect paid by Roman Catholics to the relics and tombs of saints seemed childish or sinful, are said to have begged, with their dying breath, that their coffins might be placed as near as possible to the coffin of the author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*." His last words were, "Take me, for I come to Thee." These words were an echo of the words Bunyan tells us he heard when sitting by the fire in his Elstow cottage, at the end of his long struggle with darkness and despair, "I must go to Jesus." "At this, my former darkness and atheism fled away, and the blessed things of heaven were set within my view." So we may believe that, when the end came, in the house on Snow Hill, all his former darkness fled away, and the blessed things of heaven, which he had made so real and beautiful to others, were set before his view.

Although living in a day when sects swarmed in the land, Bunyan was a catholic Christian. He had a vision of the Kingdom of God, and of the brotherhood of all true believers. He was baptized himself in the River Ouse, and was pastor of a Baptist Meeting House. Yet he was no "close communionist" and refused to take the ground that "water baptism," as he called it, was an essential initiatory rite for Christian fellowship.

It is love, he says, not baptism that discovereth us to the world to be Christ's disciples. I mean, when we love as saints, and desire communion with others because they have fellowship one with another in their fellowship with

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1736

God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. God banish bitterness out of the churches and pardon them that are the maintainers of schisms and divisions among the godly.

Stung by the charge that he was disloyal to his own communion, and that " 'Tis an ill bird that bewrays his own nest," Bunyan says:

> I know none to whom that title (that is, baptists) is so proper as to the disciples of John; and since you would know by what name I would be distinguished from others, I will tell you I would be, and hope I am, a Christian, and choose, if God should count me worthy, to be called a Christian, a believer, or other such name which is approved by the Holy Ghost. And as for those factious titles of Anabaptist, Independent, Presbyterian, or the like, I conclude that they came neither from Jerusalem nor Antioch, but rather from Hell and Babylon, for they naturally tend to division—you may know them by their fruits. . . .

Thus Bunyan was the herald and prophet of a better feeling among the disciples of Christ.

With his wonderful gift of character delineation, and with an imagination whose wings never grew weary, it might have been expected that Bunyan would have written poetry of a first class order. But certainly such was not the case. At first reading, his verses seem little better than rhyming doggerel. Yet, even in his doggerel, there is a note of vigour and originality. About his rhymes there is, as one of his biographers has well put it, " a tinkle and jingle reminiscent of his trade." Yet, now and then, Bunyan strikes a note that is worth listening to. The compilers of the *Oxford Book of Verse* have selected Christiana's song as the best example of his verse:

Bless'd be the day that I began
A pilgrim for to be;
And blessed also be the man
That thereto moved me.

'Tis true, 'twas long ere I began
To seek to live for ever;
But now I run fast as I can;
'Tis better late than never.

Our tears to joy, our fears to faith,
Are turned, as we see;
Thus our beginning (as one saith)
Shows what our end will be.

But most readers of English poetry will agree that Bunyan strikes his highest, perhaps his only truly poetic, note in his *Song of the Child with the Bird on the Bush*. These are fine verses, and the effect is not altogether cancelled by the "comparison" tacked on at the end.

My little bird how canst thou sit,
And sing amidst so many thorns?
Let me but hold upon thee get,
My love with honour thee adorns.
* * * * *
'Tis true, it is sunshine today,
Tomorrow birds will have a storm;
My pretty one, come thou away,
My bosom then shall keep thee warm.

Thou subject art to cold o' nights,
When darkness is thy covering;
At days thy danger's great by kites,
How canst thou then sit there and sing?
* * * * *

My father's palace shall be thine,
Yea, in it thou shalt sit and sing;
My little bird, if thou'lt be mine,
The whole year round shall be thy spring.
* * * * *
I'll keep thee safe from cat and cur,
No manner o' harm shall come to thee;
Yea, I will be thy succourer,
My bosom shall thy cabin be.

But lo, behold, the bird is gone,
These charmings would not make her yield;
The child's left at the bush alone,
The bird flies yonder o'er the field.

Such are specimens of Bunyan's verse. But the real poet in the man speaks to us in *Pilgrim's Progress,* where in almost every paragraph his mind takes wing.

Bunyan's four chief works are *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners, The Life and Death of Mr. Badman, The Holy War,* and *Pilgrim's Progress,* where he describes the progress of the pilgrim " from this world to glory." Bunyan tells us that in *Mr. Badman* he wishes to set forth the " life and death of the ungodly, and of their travel from this world to hell." This he does under the name and title of *Mr. Badman.* The story of Mr. Badman is cast in the form of a dialogue between Mr. Wiseman and Mr. Attentive. Mr. Wiseman does the talking, and Mr. Attentive, as the name implies, does the listening, although now and then he asks Mr. Wiseman a significant question. Bunyan traces the history of Badman, which some have thought has an autobiographic note, through a wild and godless youth up to his manhood, and from man-

hood to death. This villain, pretending to be interested in religion, woos and wins a maid "that was both godly and one that had a goodly portion." She is no more won as his wife, than he throws off the mask and shows himself in his true and wicked colours. He is a drunkard, a whoremonger, and a dishonest man.

At length, the heart-broken wife dies, warning her children not to be beguiled as she has been with fair words and the flatteries of a lying tongue. "But first," she said, "be sure of godliness, yea, as sure as it is possible for one to be in this world." Before her death, thinking of the unanswered prayers she had offered for the conversion of her husband, Badman's wife had made this beautiful comment:

> Are my prayers lost, are they forgotten, are they thrown over the bar? No, they are hanged upon the horns of the golden altar, and I must have the benefit of them myself that moment that I shall enter into the Gate, in at which the righteous nation that keepeth truth shall enter. My prayers are not lost. My tears are yet in God's bottle. I would have had a crown and glory for my husband, and for those of my children that follow his steps, but so far as I can see yet, I must rest in the hope of having all myself.

Wiseman, like the reader of the story today, is curious to know about the end of Mr. Badman. Did he repent at the last? Did he show any signs of remorse for his wicked life? In the very article of death itself, what was his experience? Bunyan might have painted the death struggles of a wicked man, as so often they have been vividly painted. But his

account of the passing of Badman is far more dramatic and powerful than any description of death struggles. Attentive asks, "Pray, how was he in his death? Was death strong upon him, or did he die with ease, quietly?" Wiseman answers, "As quietly as a lamb!" That brief reply opens for the reader the gates of future judgment and retribution, and lets him behold a great white throne and the books opened. It is a far more powerful reverberation of the mighty chord of future retribution than if Bunyan had described Badman as dying amid terrible convulsions and struggles. This brief answer, "As quietly as a lamb," is one of the high-water marks of Bunyan's genius.

Bunyan is very happy in the Introductions to his works. Some of his most haunting melodies are struck in the opening words of *Pilgrim's Progress*. This is true also of *The Holy War*, where he says:

> In my travels, as I walked through many regions and countries, it was my chance to happen into that famous continent of Universe. A very large and spacious country it is. It lieth between the two poles, and just amidst the four points of the heaven. It is a place well watered, and richly adorned with hills and valleys, bravely situated; and for the most part, (at least where I was,) very fruitful; also well peopled and a very sweet air.

With such a noble beginning, worthy to take rank with Elizabethan prose at its best, Bunyan had a formidable task on his hands to maintain the high standard of this overture. But that he succeeded, every reader will agree.

At the close of Bunyan's account of his imprisonment, he writes:

> Many more of the dealings of God towards me I might relate, but these out of the spoils won in battle I have dedicated to maintain the house of God.

Of all the spoils which Bunyan won in the battle of his imprisonment, the most precious, and today the most venerated, is *Pilgrim's Progress*. Much ink has been spilled in the debate as to when or where Bunyan wrote *Pilgrim's Progress;* whether in the county jail or in the town lock-up; during the first imprisonment, the second imprisonment, or between the two. It makes no difference when or where he wrote it. The only important and obvious fact is that he dreamed the great dream after he, himself, had passed through his Slough of Despond and found his way out of darkness into the City of Light. The best account of the origin of *Pilgrim's Progress* is found in *The Author's Apology*. Here he says:

> *When at the first I took my pen in hand,*
> *Thus for to write, I did not understand*
> *That I at all should make a little book*
> *In such a mode; nay, I had undertook*
> *To make another; which, when almost done,*
> *Before I was aware, I this begun.*
> *And thus it was: I writing of the way*
> *And race of saints in this our gospel-day,*
> *Fell suddenly into an allegory,*
> *About their journey, and the way to glory.*

The other book which he says was almost done when

he fell into an allegory, was possibly *The Heavenly Footman,* based on I Corinthians 9:24: "*Run that ye may obtain,*" in which he likens the Christian's life to a race. It is quite possible that the development of that work led him naturally into the allegory and metaphor not of a race, but of a pilgrimage. This was probably during his first imprisonment. Then the partial sketch was perhaps laid aside and finished during his second imprisonment for six months, in the town lock-up, on the bridge over the river Ouse.

No world-famous book ever cost its author so little and yet so much. He tells us his thoughts began to multiply like "sparks that from the coals of fire do fly." He had no particular plan in mind:

I only thought to make
I knew not what; nor did I undertake
Thereby to please my neighbour; no, not I;
I did it my own self to gratify.

It was not a work to which he could devote his serious hours, but only his vacant seasons:

Neither did I but vacant seasons spend
In this my scribble; nor did I intend
But to divert myself in doing this
From worser thoughts which make me do amiss.

When he had completed the allegory he submitted it to some of his friends to get their judgment as to whether or not it ought to be published:

And some said, Let them live; some, Let them die:
Some said, John, print it; others said, Not so:
Some said, It might do good; others said, No.

Fortunately, Bunyan followed his own counsel and determined to send forth his little book and asked all its readers, they who would "be in a dream and yet not sleep," or who would "in a moment laugh and weep," who would read themselves, and yet read they knew not what, "to lay his book their head and heart together."

Pilgrim's Progress was published in 1678, and immediately met with an enthusiastic reception throughout Great Britain and her colonies. By 1685, ten editions had been issued. The engraver's art aided in the distribution and popularity of the book. Those who read the allegory in their childhood will never forget the terror and delight with which they beheld Christian thrusting his sword into Apollyon as that black fiend spreads his wings in retreat, or the Pilgrim plunging through the Slough of Despond, walking the fiend-beset path in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, groaning in the prison of Giant Despair, or refreshed at the Palace Beautiful, or talking with the Shepherds in the Delectable Mountains. By the time he was ready to publish the second part of *Pilgrim's Progress*, Bunyan had an easy confidence in its success because of the great popularity of the first, for he says:

My Pilgrim's book has travell'd sea and land,
Yet could I never come to understand
That it was slighted, or turn'd out of door
By any kingdom, were they rich or poor.
In France and Flanders, where men kill each other,
My Pilgrim is esteem'd a friend, a brother.
In Holland, too, 'tis said, as I am told,
My Pilgrim is with some worth more than gold.

Highlanders and wild Irish can agree
My Pilgrim should familiar with them be.
'Tis in New England under such advance,
Receives there so much loving countenance,
As to be trimm'd, new clothed, and deck'd with gems,
That it may show its features and its limbs,
Yet more; so comely doth my Pilgrim walk,
That of him thousands daily sing and talk.

Popular with religious people of the middle and lower classes, *Pilgrim's Progress* did not, at first, meet the favour of the upper classes. But soon the verdict of the masses was accepted by the educated minority; perhaps the only instance, says Macaulay, where the educated minority has come over to the opinion of the common people. The wide range and appeal of *Pilgrim's Progress* is demonstrated in a striking manner by the various efforts to imitate it or improve it. Calvinists, more strict than Bunyan, have endeavoured to amend it to suit their taste; Roman Catholics have left out Giant Pope with his toothless gums and bone-strewn cavern, and have turned the book into a manual of devotion for Catholics; Baptists have tampered with it, so as to make immersion stand out as a condition of salvation; and Sacramentarians have amended it, so as to give a chief place to the two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The catholicity of the book is proven by these very efforts to change and alter it to suit the desires or prejudices of different communions and sects.

The writing of *Pilgrim's Progress* cost the author, upon his own testimony, almost nothing. Never did a great work flow more spontaneously and easily from

an author's mind and pen. Yet never did a great work cost its author more. It is a book born, not made; but born in sore travail and anguish of spirit.

The second part of *Pilgrim's Progress* Froude calls a "feeble reverberation of the first, like all second parts." But this hardly does it justice. The reader of the second part is at a certain disadvantage because he has already finished the journey of Christian and his companion. Nor is it to be expected that the reader of the second part can feel again the thrill he felt at the combat between Christian and Apollyon in the Valley of Humiliation. Nevertheless, in a very real sense the second part of *Pilgrim's Progress* is more than just a sequel; it is a true conclusion and climax. The first part ends in tragedy, a door to hell hard by the gate of heaven, and Ignorance cast into hell by that door. But the second part ends in glory, as Standfast and the other pilgrims go through the River and are received with trumpets, singers and players, horses and chariots, as they come up to the Beautiful Gate of the City.

One of the reasons why *Pilgrim's Progress* has made so wide an appeal to the hearts of men is that it is the story of a man of like passions with ourselves. The Christian life is not a midsummer night's dream, nor an ecstasy of perfection, but a struggle with self and circumstance, a warfare with sin from which there is no discharge. It is significant to recall that most of the trials and troubles and dangers which befell Pilgrim happened to him after he had got through the Slough of Despond, and after the burden had fallen

from his shoulders at the Cross. Had Bunyan told us of a man who was converted, and then never had a doubt or fear, a stumble or a fall, his book would never have been heard of. But because he tells us of struggles, doubts, stumblings and fallings, we feel that this is the Pilgrim of our own hearts and our own lives, everywhere tracked by the shadow of our lower selves.

If the first part of *Pilgrim's Progress* shows us a pilgrim assailed with temptations, ever struggling, desperately striving, sometimes deceived, tempted, and led astray, the second part of *Pilgrim's Progress* is of help and comfort because it tells us of a different type of disciple and pilgrim than Christian, that is, men who had different religious experiences, some strong, some weak, and yet who all contrived to get safe to the Celestial City:

> *They softly went, but sure, and at the end*
> *Found that the Lord of Pilgrims was their friend.*

There is old Mr. Honest, for example, who comes from the town of Stupidity, which lieth about four degrees beyond the City of Destruction. No dread alarm, no terrible conviction of sin, has started Honest on his pilgrimage, but the Sun of Righteousness has warmed him even in his town so far off the sun, and therefore he has started on his journey. Then, in contrast with Great-Heart and Mr. Valiant-for-the-Truth, we have other types of pilgrims such as Mr. Feeble-Mind with his "whitely look," and his uncle, Mr. Fearing, who had "a Slough of Despond in his mind." Then there is Master Ready-to-Halt, "a man

with crutches, but without fault," and Master Despondency, with Much-Afraid, his daughter. Yet these, too, get across the river and pass through the gate into the Celestial City. This is of no little comfort, for we are not all Christians, Great-Hearts, or Valiants-for-the-Truth.

The high-water mark of the first part of *Pilgrim's Progress* is the passage where Bunyan describes what the Pilgrims saw and heard in the country of Beulah, a passage which can be laid, without fear of suffering by comparison, along side of the finest specimens of English prose:

> Now I saw in my dream, that by this time the pilgrims were got over the Enchanted Ground, and entering into the country of Beulah, whose air was very sweet and pleasant; the way lying directly through it, they solaced themselves there for a season. Yea, here they heard continually the singing of birds, and saw every day the flowers appear in the earth, and heard the voice of the turtle in the land. In this country the sun shineth night and day; wherefore this was beyond the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and also out of the reach of Giant Despair; neither could they from this place so much as see Doubting Castle. Here they were within sight of the City they were going to; also here met them some of the inhabitants thereof; for in this land the Shining Ones commonly walked, because it was upon the borders of heaven.

In the second part of *Pilgrim's Progress* Bunyan reaches his greatest height, in a sense, the real climax of his whole work, when he comes to tell how Mr. Standfast received his summons and passed over the river. Mr. Honest, Valiant-for-the-Truth, Christiana,

and the rest of them, one by one, had received their summons. At length the post brought a summons for Mr. Standfast, telling him that his time has come, "for his Master was not willing that he should be so far from Him any longer." Having set things in order, Mr. Standfast goes down to the river:

When Mr. Standfast had thus set things in order, and the time being come for him to haste him away, he, also, went down to the river. Now there was a great calm at that time in the river; wherefore Mr. Standfast, when he was about halfway in, stood awhile, and talked to his companions that had waited upon him thither. And he said, This river has been a terror to many; yea, the thoughts of it, also, have often frightened me; but now, me thinks, I stand easy; my foot is fixed upon that on which the feet of the priests that bare the ark of the covenant stood while Israel went over this Jordan. The waters indeed, are to the palate bitter, and to the stomach cold; yet the thoughts of what I am going to, and of the convoy that waits for me on the other side, lie as a glowing coal at my heart. I see myself now at the end of my journey; my toilsome days are ended. I am going to see that head which was crowned with thorns, and that face which was spit upon for me. I have formerly lived by hearsay and faith; but now I go where I shall live by sight, and shall be with him in whose company I delight myself. I have loved to hear my Lord spoken of; and wherever I have seen the print of His shoe in the earth, there have I coveted to set my foot, too. His name has been to me a civet-box; yea, sweeter than all perfumes. His voice to me has been most sweet, and his countenance I have more desired than they that have most desired the light of the sun. His words I did use to gather for my food, and for antidotes against my faintings. He has held me, and hath kept me from mine iniquities; yea, my steps hath He strengthened in His way.

Outside of inspired literature, there is nowhere to be found a passage which sets forth in such beautiful language the love of a believing soul for Christ, and how Christ is precious unto them that believe. Here we have the stern seventeenth century Puritan, a lover and a troubadour of Jesus Christ.

The way to the Celestial City has grown much easier in our day than it was in Bunyan's day. Indeed, the question may be asked, Is there a City of Destruction and is there a City of Life? More and more the Christian pulpit turns away from an effort to answer the one great question of religion—"*What must I do to be saved?*"

> Conviction of sin, writes Froude, has become a phrase shallow and ineffective, even in those who use it most sincerely. Yet moral evil is still the cause of nine-tenths of human misery and it is not easy to measure the value of a man who could prolong among his fellow creatures the sense of the deadly nature of it even in the form of a decomposing theology.

In the apparently decomposing theology of Protestant Christianity, it becomes more and more difficult to prolong a sense of sin among mankind. Yet a religion or a form of Christianity which cannot, or dare not, declare the fact of sin, nor cares to busy itself with the problem of how men shall be delivered from the stain and burden of their sins, has no real business in the world, because it has nothing to say to the world.

The present-day drift away from evangelical Christianity, and the gradual subsidence of such promon-

tories of truth as conviction of sin, regeneration, atonement and judgment to come, with its reward and its punishment—all this, was forecast by Hawthorne in his tremendous satire, *The Celestial Railroad,* perhaps the greatest of all the commentaries on *Pilgrim's Progress.* In his dream, the new pilgrim visited that region of the earth in which lies the famous City of Destruction. Having heard that a railroad had recently been established between this town and the Celestial City, he resolved to gratify a liberal curiosity by making a trip thither. Accordingly, he set out on a coach to drive to the station-house. In his company was one, Mr. Smooth-it-Away, who was a director and large stockholder of the railroad. The Slough of Despond they crossed by a convenient bridge of elegant construction, the foundations for which had been secured by throwing into the Slough editions of books of morality, volumes of French philosophy and German rationalism, tracts, sermons and essays of modern clergymen, extracts from quaint old Confucius and from Hindu sages, together with a few ingenuous commentaries on texts of Scripture—all of which by some scientific process had been converted into a mass like granite.

They alighted at the station-house which had been erected on the site of the little Wicket Gate, which stood across the highway and, by its inconvenient narrowness, was a great obstruction to the traveller of liberal mind and expansive stomach. A large number of passengers were at the station-house awaiting the departure of the train. It would have done Bunyan's

heart good to see the change in attitude of all those undertaking the journey. Instead of a lonely and ragged man with a huge burden on his back, and the whole city hooting after him, the first gentlemen and the most respectable citizens in the neighbourhood were setting out on the pilgrimage, as if it were a summer tour. Among these travellers there was much pleasant conversation about the news of the day, topics of business and politics, the lighter matters of amusement, while religion, undoubtedly the main thing at heart, was drawn tastefully into the background. Even an infidel would have heard little or nothing to have shocked his sensibilities.

The Pilgrim was amazed to discover that the engineer was Christian's old enemy, Apollyon, with whom he had fought so fierce a battle in the Valley of Humiliation. As the train rattled merrily on, covering a greater distance in ten minutes than Christian trudged over in a day, the travellers laughed to observe two dusty journeyers in the old pilgrim's guise, with cockle-shell and staff, their mystic rolls of parchment in their hands, and their intolerable burdens on their backs. As they were rushing by the place where Christian's burden fell from his shoulders at the sight of the Cross, Mr. Smooth-it-Away, Mr. Live-for-the-World, Mr. Hide-Sin-in-the-Heart, Mr. Scaly-Conscience, and a lot of gentlemen from the town of Shun-Repentance, began to descant upon the inestimable advantages resulting from the safety of their baggage. At the Hill Difficulty a tunnel had been constructed through the heart of the rocky mountain, and the materials taken from the

heart of the hill had been employed in filling up the Valley of Humiliation, thus obviating the necessity of descending into that disagreeable and unwholesome hollow.

When the train shot into the Valley of the Shadow, the pilgrim had some palpitations of heart, at the headlong rush over the causeway which had been constructed. But the Dark Valley had been illuminated with inflammable gas, and they contrived to get through without a mishap. Here and there, the Pilgrim thought he saw in the fiercely gleaming gas-lamps grim faces that bore the aspect and expression of individual sins or evil passions, but as the light of natural day began to struggle with the glow of the lanterns, these vain imaginations lost their vividness, and finally vanished with the first ray of sunshine that greeted their escape from the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

At the end of the Valley was the Cavern, where, as Bunyan related, dwelt the two cruel giants, Pope and Pagan, who had strewn the ground about their den with the bones of slaughtered pilgrims. These vile old troglodytes were no longer there, but into their deserted cave another terrible giant had thrust himself, making it his business to seize upon all the travellers and fatten them for his table with plentiful meals of moonshine, raw potatoes and sawdust. This giant was called Transcendentalist, but as to his form, his features, his substance and his nature generally, it was his chief peculiarity that neither he, for himself, nor anybody for him, had ever been able to describe him.

When the train steamed into the ancient City of

Vanity Fair, he was surprised to discover that the pilgrims were quite popular at the Fair and spent no little time there; for almost anything could be purchased for a bit of script called Conscience. Almost every street had its church, and among the names of the preachers were the Rev. Shallow-Deep, the Rev. Stumble-at-Truth, the Rev. Mr. This-to-Day, who expects shortly to resign his pulpit to the Rev. That-Tomorrow, together with the Rev. Mr. Bewilderment, the Rev. Mr. Clog-the-Spirit, and, last and greatest, the Rev. Dr. Wind-of-Doctrine. Observing the buying and selling, the pilgrim thought he saw some foolish bargains. A young man who laid out a considerable portion of his fortune in the purchase of diseases, finally sold all the rest for a lot of repentance and a suit of rags; and a very pretty girl, who bartered a heart as clear as crystal, for another jewel of the same kind, but so worn and defaced as to be utterly worthless.

Resuming his journey, the Pilgrim came up to the Castle of Giant Despair, but since his death, chartered by Mr. Flimsy-faith, who there kept an excellent house of entertainment. After an hour's nap, the Pilgrim awoke, as the train crossed the border of the pleasant land of Beulah. Soon the engine, by its screams, announced the close vicinity of the final station-house. In sounding this, the closing, final blast on the siren, Apollyon outdid himself and created an infernal uproar, which, besides disturbing the peaceful inhabitants of Beulah, must have sent its discord even through the Celestial Gate. At length they drew up alongside of the ferry-boat which lay in the river. The

Pilgrim hurried aboard, but when he turned to look back to the shore, he was amazed to discern Mr. Smooth-it-Away waving his hand in token of farewell. He cried out to him if he was not going over to the Celestial City. "Oh, no," answered Mr. Smooth-it-Away, "I have come thus far only for the sake of your pleasant company. Goodbye, we shall meet again." The Pilgrim then rushed to the side of the boat, intending to fling himself on shore, but the wheels, as they began their revolution, threw a dash of spray over him so cold, "so deadly cold with the chill that will never leave those waters, until Death be drowned in his own river—that, with a shiver and a heartquake, I awoke. Thank heaven it was a dream!"

The bell-tower of the Abbey Church at Elstow stands a little distance apart from the church itself. The aged sexton told me, that if I ascended to the top of the tower, I would find the bell John Bunyan used to ring, on the northwest corner. Slowly I made my way up the winding stairway, the ancient stone steps well worn with the tread of more than three centuries of climbers. At length, brushing aside the cobwebs, and disturbing the retreat of bats and birds and pigeons, I emerged upon the topmost landing. Leaning over the parapet, I could see, far beneath me, the churchyard with its venerable flat tombs, the green on which Bunyan played one-o'-cat, the battered and scarred Moot Hall, Elstow, with its brown thatched roofs, the river Ouse, and beyond it, Bedford. Looking out towards the north and west, I saw, not far from the rectory, a swamp, which Bunyan made use of

as the Slough of Despond; and away in the distance, hard by a woodland meadow, a steep hill, the Hill Difficulty; and far off on the horizon, a beautiful range of hills, the Delectable Mountains.

Here, then, was what the natural eye of Bunyan saw before he painted for mankind the things invisible. Remembering what the sexton had told me about Bunyan's bell, I pulled the iron lever, and as the hammer fell, the tower shook with the mighty reverberation. But loosed from the confining tower, the music of the great bell went floating out over the ivy-covered graves of the dead, over the sleeping hamlet of Elstow, across the Slough of Despond, on still, beyond the fields, to the Hill Difficulty, and far off into the distance, until the Delectable Mountains seemed to give back the sweet melody.

Almost three hundred years have passed since Bunyan used to ring that bell. But the flight of years has not dimmed nor impaired its tone. It is just as deep and true and sweet today as when Bunyan used to ring it. The generation Bunyan knew, with many a generation after it, has passed away into dim silence since "he laid himself down in that place to sleep" and dreamed his dream. But human nature is still the same. Still man will wonder about a world not seen, and a life which is more than this life. Still there is no room for body and soul and sin. Still Sloughs of Despond will enmire, Hills of Difficulty confront, Valleys of the Shadow of Death affright, and Giants of Despair cast into their prison pilgrims who in this world set out to find the Everlasting World. Still is

the way narrow and strait the gate that leadeth unto eternal life. Yet the pilgrim who undertakes the journey will find that there are still Evangelists and Interpreters to help him on his way, and Shepherds, too, to point out for him the distant glories of Emmanuel's Land. And as he travels toward that country, he will not go solitary and unattended, but will have the company of other pilgrims. The bell which Bunyan struck three centuries ago, high up in the tower of his allegory, still vibrates with its ancient melody, ever haunting the imagination of mankind, its tones as deep and sweet and true as ever, for they echo the deep, eternal truths of sin, atonement, redemption, regeneration, judgment to come, and life everlasting.

II

THOMAS GUTHRIE

A PICTORIAL PREACHER

WANDERING one day down Princes Street, Edinburgh, somewhere between the Scott monument and the National Gallery, and not far from the memorial to Scottish soldiers who fell in the Boer War, I came upon a bronze group of three figures. In the centre stood the figure of a tall man, with massive head and benign countenance. On either side of him, as if taking refuge from a pursuer who would do them harm, crouched a ragged street urchin. In striking contrast with the many memorials on that famous street to Scotland's heroes on the crimson field of war, to her philosophers, scientists and poets, this fine statue commemorates the life and ministry of a preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Thomas Guthrie.

I commence with this reference to the Princes Street memorial to Guthrie, for the reason that that monument to Guthrie, his back to those ill-smelling alleys and ugly closes of the "Old Town," bad enough, God knows, even today, but fearful in their misery and depravity then, and through which he wandered in search of vagabond boys, is the best introductory com-

ment upon the homiletic power of the great preacher. To an extraordinary degree for a Scottish preacher, Guthrie was without that taste for metaphysics which characterizes so many of his countrymen. Always, it is a great heart that beats in his sermons, and a heart that could warm other hearts.

Like Chalmers, Guthrie was the son of a village merchant. He was born at Brechin, Forfarshire, on July 12, 1803, the youngest but one of thirteen children.

In 1815, when but a lad of twelve, he was sent off to Edinburgh to enter the University. He made no great mark as a scholar. "Beyond the departments of fun and fighting," he says, "I was in no way distinguished at college." In after years he was thankful that he had gained no decorations or prizes, for the absence of them saved him from any conceit on the ground of scholarship.

He was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Brechin, in 1825; but no patron of a congregation offering him an appointment, and weary of hanging about home, he set out for Paris. There he spent a year, taking lectures at the Sorbonne under eminent scientists, and making the round of the French hospitals. In his *Journal* for that year is the following reference to Charles Hodge:

> I then set off for Mark Wilks' service, which is held in a part of the Oratoire. The preacher was a Mr. Hodge, an American professor, who had come to Europe for the purpose of studying Oriental languages. He intended to do so in Germany, but was at present studying French in

Paris, as a medium of communication with the Germans. He was a young-like, intelligent, fair, good-looking, thin, and rather little man; and gave us a capital sermon from the nineteenth verse of the fifth chapter of First John. The singing was very beautiful. The English sounded most sweetly and pleasantly to my ear.

Upon returning to Brechin, in 1827, he succeeded one of his brothers as manager of the bank, making a very successful administrator of its affairs. It was not until 1830 that he was named for the parish of Arbilot. It had been a long apprenticeship that he had served, but the training in science and in business was undoubtedly of great influence upon his mind, and helps to an understanding of his fondness for dealing with facts, objects, the external side of life, and his distaste for metaphysics, and his comparative inability to touch the hidden springs of thought.

Arbilot, a parish of a thousand souls, faced on the North Sea. The manse and the church were in sad disrepair, the snow frequently lying on the rafters of the church when he was preaching, and nothing but an earth floor beneath his hearers' feet. The manse was repaired, a new church built, a library and a savings bank started. He made it plain from the beginning that he had come, not to seek honour of his people, but to serve them.

After seven years of useful labour at Arbilot, the Town Council of Edinburgh elected him one of the ministers of Old Greyfriars Church. When Guthrie heard that the deputation from the Council was coming down to hear him, he tried to cheat them by getting

McCosh, afterwards President of Princeton College, and then his nearest neighbour at Arbroath, to exchange pulpits with him. McCosh refused to aid him, telling him that leaving Arbilot on that Sabbath, to escape the call to Edinburgh, would be as bad as Jonah's flight, when ordered to go and preach in Nineveh.

It was a great arena to which Guthrie was called. In a way that was true in no other country, the greatness that was Scotland clustered about the foot of the crag upon which stood—and still stands—the grim old Castle. The chief figure in the Church of Scotland, Dr. Chalmers, was professor of Divinity at the University, whither he had come from St. Andrews. Dr. Candlish was at St. George's, and Dr. Cunningham at Trinity. Into this camp of the mighty came the tall, broad-shouldered youth of twenty-seven years. His own church was one of the historic shrines of Edinburgh and all Scotland, for it was there—on a Sunday in February, 1638, just two centuries before Guthrie came up from Arbilot to become the minister—that National Covenant was read aloud to the multitude in the church, and in the churchyard. When the reading was finished the Covenant was laid upon the top of one of the flat tombs, and the people crowded to sign it, not a few, in their enthusiasm, opening their veins that they might sign it in their own blood. On the Martyrs' Monument in Greyfriars there are only three names of the eighteen thousand who perished in the days of the Covenant—Argyll's, Renwick's, and James Guthrie's. This James Guthrie was one of the an-

cestors of the Thomas Guthrie, who now came to be minister of the historic church. If great association and the background of history mean anything to a preacher, then Guthrie was peculiarly blessed of fortune in being made the minister of a church whose very stones were redolent of great religious convictions and enthusiasms.

When he accepted the call to Edinburgh, Guthrie made with himself a quiet resolve that, if he did not succeed in attracting and holding the people in the Scottish metropolis, he would not be an incubus to the church there, but would go out to America, or some of the British colonies. But he had not been long at Greyfriars before that resolve faded far into the background, for he at once commanded large congregations, and continued to do so, for thirty-four years. There is probably not on record another instance of such a popularity, continued without sign or token of diminution, for the length of an entire generation. Chalmers was immensely popular, but his pastorates were brief, followed by periods of professorship in St. Andrews and Edinburgh. But for thirty-four years, until his resignation in 1864, Guthrie drew and held the crowds which thronged his churches, Greyfriars and St. John's.

When he came to Edinburgh, Guthrie determined to follow the same plan and make an heroic assault upon the vice and misery and destitution, physical and moral, which confronted him wherever he turned.

One of the best examples of his descriptive power is that passage in *Out of Harness* where he describes

his meeting with Chalmers shortly after his coming to Edinburgh:

It was there where one looks down on the street below, and on the foul, crowded closes that stretch like ribs down into the Cowgate, I stood on a gloomy day in the fall of the year 1837. The streets were a puddle; the heavy air, loaded with smoke, was thick and murky; right below lay the narrow street of dingy tenements, whose toppling chimneys and patched and battered roofs were fit emblems of the fortunes of most of their tenants. Of these, some were lying over the sills of windows innocent of glass, or stuffed with old hats and dirty rags; others, coarse-looking women, with squalid children in their arms or at their feet, stood in groups at the close mouths—here with empty laughter, chafing any passing acquaintance, there screaming with each other in a drunken brawl, or standing sullen and silent, with hunger and ill usage in their saddened looks. A brewer's cart, threatening to crush beneath its ponderous wheels the ragged urchins who had no other playground, rumbled over the causeway, drowning the quavering voice of one whose drooping head and scanty dress were in ill harmony with song, but not drowning the shrill pipe of an Irish girl, who thumped the back of an unlucky donkey, and cried her herrings at " three a penny."

So looked the parish I had come to cultivate; and while contrasting the scene below with pleasant recollections of the parish I had just left—its singing larks, daisied pastures, decent peasants, and the grand blue sea rolling its lines of snowy breakers on the shore, my rather sad and sombre ruminations were suddenly checked. A hand was laid on my shoulder. I turned around to find Dr. Chalmers at my elbow. This good and great man knew that I had accepted an Edinburgh charge mainly for the purpose of trying what the parochial or territorial system, fairly wrought, could do towards Christianizing the heathendom beneath our feet,

and restoring the denizens of the Cowgate and its closes to sober, decent and churchgoing habits. Contemplating the scene for a little in silence, all at once, with his broad Luther-like face glowing with enthusiasm, he waved his arm to exclaim, "A beautiful field, sir; a very fine field of operation!"

In these daily invasions of the haunts of sin and misery the thing that most touched Guthrie was the condition of the children. In 1841, on a visit to Anstruther, the birthplace of Chalmers, he saw a painting of a cobbler's shop. On his stool sat the cobbler, spectacles on his nose, an old shoe on his knees, massive forehead and firm mouth and eyes that beamed with benevolence. Around the cobbler, sitting or standing, was a group of children, all busy at their lessons. It was a representation of John Pounds, the Portsmouth cobbler who had taken pity on the "ragged children whom magistrates and ministers, ladies and gentlemen, were leaving to run wild, and go to ruin on their streets." Looking upon the picture, Guthrie felt humiliated, ashamed of himself, and resolved to bestir himself to do more for little children. A second incident which turned his heart and mind in the direction of destitute children was a midnight visit to the police station, where he saw the homeless waifs seeking shelter for the night. On one open space before a stove, where the light shone full on his face, lay a poor child who attracted his special attention. He thus describes him:

He was miserably clad; he seemed about eight years old; he had the sweetest face I ever saw; his bed was the pave-

ment, his pillow a brick, and as he lay calm in sleep, forgetful of all his sorrows, he might have served for a picture of injured innocence. He knew neither father nor mother, brothers nor friends; in the wide world his only friends were the police; how he lived they did not know; but there he was at night. I could not get that boy out of my mind or heart for days and nights together. I have often regretted that some effort was not made to save him. Before now, launched on the sea of passions and exposed to a thousand temptations, he has, too probably, become a melancholy wreck; left by a society, more criminal than he, to become a criminal, and then punished for his fate, not his fault.

"I have the satisfaction," says Guthrie, "when I lay my head upon my pillow, of always finding one soft part of it: and that is, that God has made me an instrument in His hand by saving many a poor creature from a life of misery and crime." The beautiful monument on Princes Street, with the "street Arabs" —it was Guthrie who brought that expression into our vocabulary—taking refuge under his arms, is the best possible memorial to the great preacher who saw the multitude of little children as sheep without a shepherd, and was moved thereat with compassion. Like most celebrated preachers, Guthrie quoted hardly at all, and almost never poetry. But there was one bit of verse that he did use occasionally, and which he called *My Favourite Motto*—and a good motto, too, for all preachers of the message of the compassionate Christ—

I live for those that love me,
For those who know me true,
For the heaven that smiles above me,
And waits my coming, too;

For the cause that needs assistance,
For the wrongs that need resistance,
For the future in the distance,
For the good that I can do.

Guthrie was a firm believer in the theory and practice of Paley, who once wrote to students for the ministry, " Disdain not the old fashion of dividing your sermon into heads; a discourse which rejects these aids to perspicuity will turn out a bewildering rhapsody, without aim or effect, order or conclusion."

As for the outlines of his sermon, they recall Newman Hall's comment, quoting what had been said of the sermon preached by a Welsh preacher, " There was nothing peculiar in the sermon—old bones." So one says to himself, as he turns over the pages of Guthrie's sermons, Old Bones indeed! bones that generations of preachers have carefully picked over. The outlines are just what a teacher of homiletics would get from a junior in the seminary.

Yet the themes of the sermons and the divisions of them are the clear and plain statement of the great facts of the Christian religion. Guthrie never, unconsciously or by effort, gives a unique or unusual statement of any Christian truth. He takes the familiar truths, the great commonplaces of the Christian revelation, and speaks about them in a way that everybody understands. He would be called platitudinous by those who, in their effort to escape the ordinary and familiar, sometimes get away from the Gospel altogether. But, platitudinous or not, Guthrie is always sensible and reasonable. His platform

may be evident and ordinary, but it is broad and substantial.

As you read the sermons, or in imagination listen to the preacher, you discover, too, that there is a man talking who knows and understands the average man. It is to that average man that he is addressing himself. The listener that your mind pictures as waiting upon these sermons is not the philosopher or metaphysician or mystic dreamer, but the average man and the average woman. There were, indeed, plenty of poets and statesmen and philosophers who came to hear him, but always it is the average man who is being spoken to in these sermons. You feel that they are being addressed by a sensible man, who takes for granted certain common facts of human nature. So it is that these very traits which make Guthrie, of all the great preachers the most intolerable to read—the plain, straightforward texts, and obvious divisions of the theme, the undisguised and easily comprehended comments upon God, the Bible, life and destiny—were also his strength as an oral preacher.

When we turn from the bones of the sermons and their observations to their colour, fragrance and tone, it is an altogether different matter. Now we come upon Guthrie the painter, the story-teller, the illustrator. When he lay upon his deathbed at St. Leonard's, he took up a mirror and, examining his face, said that he was doing as the sailor did who climbed to the masthead to try if he could see land. And when his sight began to fail him, he likened it to land birds alighting on the mast and letting the weary mariner

know that he was near to the desired haven. Keep in mind those two scenes, Guthrie with the ragged children taking refuge under his arms, and Guthrie on his deathbed, with the mirror in his hand likening himself to the sailor at the masthead, and you have before you the two chief characteristics and excellencies of his preaching—his compassion and his power of illustration.

The gift, of course, must have been in him from the beginning, else he could not have painted as he did. But the peculiar thing about the illustrative style of Guthrie is, that it was consciously and deliberately acquired. His first sermons showed little or nothing of the pictorial style which afterwards made him famous. His assumption of the anecdotal and illustrative method was due to a discovery made at Arbilot, that the portions of his sermons which " stuck " were the illustrations. Instead of the usual second service, he inaugurated, at Arbilot, a Sunday evening class for the young people. At this class he catechised the young men and young women, and went over with them the sermon of the morning. He was surprised and humiliated to discover how little of his carefully prepared sermon he could get from them. To aid them, he set forth the topics of the sermon by illustrations drawn from nature, history, the world. This illustrative practice, and the fact that what they did remember of any sermon was the story or the illustration, and his own increasing ability to use illustrations, caused him to change his whole manner of preaching. Describing the change, Dr. McCosh says of him, " He

made shrewd practical remarks, told anecdotes of what he had seen and heard, and used illustrations from country life and scenes in which the people were interested." Let Guthrie tell his own story:

When I went to Arbilot, he says, I knew pretty well how to speak sermons, but very little about how to compose them; so I set myself vigorously to study how to illustrate the great truths of the Gospel, and enforce them, so that there should be no sleepers in the church, no wandering eyes, but everywhere an eager attention. Savingly to convert my hearers was not within my power; but to command their attention, to awaken their interest, to instruct their minds was—and I determined to do it.

With this end, I used the simplest, plainest terms, avoiding anything vulgar, but always, where possible, employing the Saxon tongue, the mother tongue of my hearers. I studied the style of the addresses which the ancient and inspired prophets delivered to the people of Israel, and saw how, differing from dry disquisitions or naked statement of truths, they abounded in metaphors, figures and illustrations. I turned to the Gospels and found that He who knew what was in man, what could best illuminate a subject, win the attention and move the heart, used parables or illustrations, stories, comparisons, drawn from the scenes of nature and familiar life, to a large extent in His teachings; in regard to which a woman—type of the masses—said, " The parts of the Bible that I like best are the ' likes.' "

Taught by such models, and encouraged in my resolution by such authorities, I resolved to follow, though it should be at a vast distance, these ancient masters of the art of preaching; being all the more ready to do so, as it would be in harmony with the natural turn and bent of my own mind.

I was careful to observe by the faces of my hearers, and also by the account the more intelligent of my Sunday

evening class gave of my discourses, the style and character of those parts which had made the deepest impression, that I might cultivate it.

After my discourse was written, I spent hours in correcting it; latterly always for that purpose keeping a blank page on my manuscript opposite a written one, cutting out dry bits, giving point to dull ones, making clear any obscurity, and narrative parts more graphic, throwing more pathos into appeals, and copying God in His works by adding the ornamental to the useful. The longer I have lived and composed, I have acted more and more according to the saying of Sir Joshua Reynolds in his *Lectures on Painting*, that God does not give excellence to men but as the reward of labour.

To this, with my style of delivery, and self-possession, and command and flexibility of voice, and power of throwing myself into the characters I was depicting,—and feeling their emotions, and expressing them in such language, and looks, and tones as they would themselves have done, I attribute the " popularity " which I early gained and maintained for well nigh forty years of a public ministry.

For the groundwork of his preaching Guthrie had the rugged and grand doctrines of the Christian religion. He was no metaphysician, keen in speculative thought; nor was he a deep searcher of the things of the inner life of the soul. But the solid foundations of the Christian revelation were always underneath him, and he never committed the blunder that makes all great preaching impossible, that is, dealing only with the low themes of prudential ethics. He may not have been a mystic or a speculative seer, but he never descended to the low platform of a mere moralist, and the redemptive truths of Christianity are always there, even if in the background. With this went his shrewd

common sense and his wide knowledge of men. " Great masses of practical wisdom came out. People did not say, but they felt 'that man knows what is in my heart; he speaks to my experience, to what I have passed through; he knows my labours and my troubles, and I feel that I can trust him and take him as my adviser.' "

In his dealing with the familiar ground of Christian doctrine Guthrie went on the correct theory that out of the heart are the issues of religion and life. He preached to the common sense of men, but also to the common heart of men. He knew that men had hearts, emotions, and he sought in every way to make the chords of the heart vibrate. It was probably this legitimate appeal to the heart that made Guthrie, in spite of the fact that he was not a deep expounder of Scripture nor a close reasoner, a favourite preacher for intellectual men like Hugh Miller and Lord Cockburn. The latter, asked one morning where he was going to church, answered, " Oh, I'm going to hae a greet with Guthrie." Dr. McCosh speaks of the crowds that would flock to hear him when he came to Arbroath to preach on a summer evening and thus comments on the emotional quality of his preaching:

> Some hard men thought of him that his discourses were not very logical; some finical men and women regarded his Forfarshire pronunciation as very broad, and his illustrations rather vivid; but they all went to hear him, because they got their hearts warmed.

Guthrie wisely chose to dwell more in his sermons upon the dramatic and tragic side of life, and his power

to move the feelings had full opportunity for exhibition as he described the miseries of the destitute in the city's darksome dens, the perils of the shipwrecked, and the emotions of men in any of the tense moments of life. When he was called to Edinburgh, a number of his co-presbyters gathered about him and said, "Mr. Guthrie, you must change your style of preaching when you have to appear before an audience so polished as that of Edinburgh." His friend McCosh heard of this silly counsel and implored him not to alter his mode of speaking, assuring him that human nature is much the same everywhere, and that what had moved the people of Arbilot and Arbroath would also move the people of Edinburgh. No greater absurdity was ever put forth than to say of this or that acceptable preacher, that the qualities which endear him to one class of hearers will not appeal to those of a different class as well. In the great depths men are all the same, and he who can speak to the heart that is in man can reach and interest any class of men. Guthrie tells us:

> In view of going to Edinburgh I had resolved to adhere to the same style of preaching which seemed to make me popular and acceptable at Arbilot, concluding that, as God had fashioned all men's hearts alike, human nature was the same in the town as in the country—in ladies and gentlemen as in lads and lassies. There were not two Gospels; and I knew from the example of our Saviour's discourses that the highest taste might be gratified by one of whom it might be said, "the common people heard him gladly." I had read how ministers who were popular in the country, lost all their attractions and failed when they were taken to Edinburgh.

Fancying that they must adopt there a superior and more intellectual style of preaching, they abandoned their natural and efficient for a stiff and stilted manner. On this, which has proved to many a rock ahead, I resolved not to make shipwreck; while, at the same time, I resolved to spare no pains, nor toil nor time in careful preparation, in making my descriptions graphic, my statements lucid, my appeals pathetic, in filling my discourses, in fact, with what would both strike and stick.

Charles Wolfe, the celebrated author of that perfect poem, *The Burial of Sir John Moore,* was also a preacher of unusual originality and poetic charm. He left behind him some very helpful suggestions to preachers. Among these hints is the following: " Bring in familiar topics. Begin naturally and easily, but so as to excite curiosity—with an incident or anecdote. Begin in an original and striking but sedate manner." Thomas Guthrie's sermons are splendid examples of introductions which are sedate, but striking and original, and which excite curiosity.

In this effort to make things strike and stick the introductions to his sermons afford an interesting study. He seems determined to say that which will at once strike the mind and eye of the hearer, rather than commence indifferently, contextually, platitudinously, and then slowly " work up." He regarded that first paragraph as one of the most important portions of his sermons, and in many of his sermons it must be confessed that, so far as the reading of the sermons is concerned, the introductions are the most interesting part. The introduction in its remoteness, and his hearers must have been at a loss to see what he would

be at, often excited curiosity; but regardless of any connection with the main theme, the introduction itself was worth listening to. Anecdotes of war, shipwreck, biographical notes, storms, descriptions of the work of man or the work of nature, these are the doors through which we enter the sermons of Guthrie. Almost any sermon that you turn to is an example of this method of introduction. Let me recall a number of them. In the sermon, *I, the Lord, Have Spoken It,* or the *Security of the Believer,* he commences thus:

> When on a sultry summer day the sky gets overcast, and angry clouds gather thick upon its brow, and bush and brake are silent, and the very cattle, like human beings, draw close together, standing dumb in their untasted pastures, and while there is no ripple on the lake, nor leaf stirring on the tree, all nature seems struck with awe, and stands in trembling expectation; then, when the explosion comes, and a blinding stream of fire leaps from the cloud, and as if heaven's riven vault were tumbling down upon our head, the thunders crash, peal, roar along the sky, he has neither poetry nor piety nor sense, who does not reverently bow his head and assent to the words of David, "*The voice of the Lord is full of majesty.*"

In *The Kingdom of Christ: Translated into the Kingdom of His Dear Son,* he begins with a description of the crown jewels of Scotland in Edinburgh Castle. Vulgar curiosity sees nothing but gems and sword and sceptre, and the multitude go away to talk of their value or their beauty. But the eyes of a patriot sees more than that:

> He looks with deep and meditative interest on that rim

of gold, not for its intrinsic value, but because it once encircled the brow of Scotland's greatest king—the hero of her independence, Robert the Bruce. His fancy sees a nation in arms. Now he hears the shout of Bannockburn, and now, the long wail of Flodden. The events of centuries, passed in weary war, roll by before her. The red flames burst from lonely fortalice and busy town; the smiling vale, with its happy homesteads, lies desolate; scaffolds reek with the blood of patriots; courage grapples with despair. It is the interests that were at stake, the fight for liberty, the good blood shed, it is these, not the jewels, which in a patriot's eye make that a costly crown—a relic of the olden time, worthy of a nation's pride and jealous preservation.

One of the finest pieces of description to be met with in the sermons of Guthrie, indeed, one of the noblest passages in modern homilies, is the introduction to *The Sins and Sorrows of the City*—"*When he beheld the city, he wept over it*" (Luke 19:41), where he likens the submerged forests of the ocean pavement to the submerged masses of the city, the physical subsidence with the moral:

There is a remarkable phenomenon to be seen on certain parts of our coast. Strange to say, it proves, notwithstanding such expressions as "the stable and solid land," that it is not the land but the sea which is the stable element. On some summer day when there is not a wave to rock her, nor breath of wind to fill her sail or fan a cheek, you launch your boat upon the waters, and, pulling out beyond lowest tidemark, you idly lie upon her bows to catch the silvery glance of a passing fish, or watch the movements of the many curious creatures that travel the sea's sandy bed, or creeping out of their rocky homes, wander its tangled mazes. If the traveller is surprised to find a deep sea shell imbedded in the marbles of a mountain peak, how great is

your surprise to see beneath you a vegetation foreign to the deep! Below your boat, submerged many feet beneath the surface of the lowest tide, away down in those green crystal depths, you see no rusting anchor, no mouldering remains of some shipwrecked one, but in the standing stumps of trees the mouldering vestiges of a forest, where once the wild cat prowled, and the birds of heaven, singing their loves, had nestled and nursed their young.

Many of our cities present a phenomenon as melancholy to the eye of a philanthropist, as the other is interesting to a philosopher, or geologist. In their economical, educational, moral and religious aspects, certain parts of the city bear palpable evidence of a corresponding subsidence. Not a single house, nor a block of houses, but whole streets, once from end to end the homes of decency and industry, and wealth and rank and piety, have been engulfed. A flood of ignorance and sin now breaks and roars above the tops of their highest tenements. Nor do the old stumps of a forest, still standing up erect beneath the sea wave, indicate a greater change, a deeper subsidence than the relics of ancient grandeur, and the touching memorials of piety which yet linger about those wretched dwellings, like the evening twilight on the hills, like some trace of beauty on a corpse.

In the sermon, *Trial,* Guthrie employs twenty-seven illustrations. Of these, ten are from the Bible, two from history, one from literature, one from personal experience, five from nature, six from common life and occupations, and one from poetry. Let us take up the volume of sermons, *The Gospel in Ezekiel,* and note the illustrations in the first sermon that comes under our eye. It happens to be the sermon, *Man Justified—"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean"* (Ezekiel 26:25). Our examination yields the following result: Twenty-four illustrations,

including similes and metaphors, are employed. Listening to these illustrations this is what the man in Guthrie's church would have seen before the sermon was over: Martha cumbered with care in serving the supper to Jesus; the woodbine and the ivy embracing the tree with their arms; bubbles coloured with rainbow hues and bursting at the touch; a man stretched on the bed of death; a river flowing through the meadow and reflecting in its bosom the heavens above; the old covenant of Eden, "Do this, and live;" the Nile and the Ganges with their many mouths into the sea; a tree dividing itself into two great branches, or trunks; the door of heaven guarded like the gate of a treasure house or a citadel with two iron bolts; the Scottish emigrants in America carrying their superstitions with them and seeing the fairies dance upon the green; Lazarus coming out of his grave; Guthrie baptizing a dying infant as it lay on the expiring mother's breast, to the baptism of the church being added the baptism of the father's tears; the extent, origin and uses of water; the lost traveller on the reeling desert, with bloodshot eyes, and his throat as black as dust; the red heifer of Old Testament ceremonial; two men starting off in opposite directions and meeting each other on the opposite side of the globe; the hunter, like the devil, or the minister who tries to hide hell, spreading a covering over the pit for the game. What a panorama it has been! There were no moving pictures in those days, but those who listened to Guthrie preach saw the passing show of life, in all parts of the world and in all ages of the world.

Most of the illustrative parts of Guthrie's sermons are elaborated descriptions; but now and then there is the flash of a clause or a sentence which lights up the whole scene for us, as when he refers to Joshua and how he "stopped the glowing axles of the sun," or how Christ "threw a zone of mercy around the world;" or where, wishing to illustrate the soul's longing for heaven he describes a Scot or an Englishman, exiled in the tropics: "Where the palm tree waves its graceful plumes, and birds of jewelled lustre flash and flicker among gorgeous flowers, the exile sits staring upon vacancy; a far away home lies on his heart; and borne on the wings of fancy over intervening seas and lands, he has swept away home, and hears the lark singing above his father's fields, and sees his fair-haired brother, with light foot and childhood's glee, chasing the butterfly by his native stream. And in his best hours, home, his own sinless home—a home with his father above that starry sky—will be the wish of every Christian man."

To the preacher who is discouraged by reading the sermons of a man like Guthrie and feels that all this is the work of genius, and that try as he may he can do but poorly, it will be reassuring and stimulating to know that these sermons were not struck off in the heat of the moment in the study, nor created in the excitement of the pulpit, but carefully, almost painfully worked out. He had great powers of improvisation, and no readier speaker ever went upon a platform or into a pulpit, and his discourses had all the appearance of extempore addresses. But that was because of

the thoroughness with which he had done his work. He wrote every line and carefully committed the sermon to memory. If, in memorizing the sermon, he came upon a passage that was difficult to hold in the memory he rewrote it, believing that what he could not recall easily was not clearly stated. He vocalized his sermons as he wrote them, but was careful not to vocalize as he memorized, lest the sermon should become stale, and ever kept the congregation before him, so that the sermon when finished was not a meditation, or essay, or speculation, but a sermon, an address to men and women upon the subject of gravest import. Let McCosh bear witness:

> During all the seven years he was at Arbilot, I believe he never entered the pulpit without having his discourse written and committed. Had he acted in any other way, he might have been left in Arbilot all his life, greatly esteemed, no doubt, in the district, but without ever occupying the wide sphere which God opened to him. Even in writing he kept an audience before his mind's eye, and he prepared not an abstract essay, but an address to be spoken to men and women, to young men and maidens. I have often found him on the Saturday night amending and correcting what he had written, and filling his mind with the subject. His illustrative style made his discourse more easily remembered by himself, as it was more easily remembered by his audience.

We have noted the deliberate plan of Guthrie to preach pictorially. He used to speak of the three chief rules of preaching as the " Three P's "—Painting, Proving, and Persuading. With him the whole emphasis was on the painting. We have noted also the painstaking method of preparation. He counted on

eighteen hours each week for his sermon preparation, from six to nine in the morning each day. "A practice this, I would recommend to all ministers, whether in town or country. It secures ample time for pulpit preparation, brings a man fresh every day to his allotted portion of work, keeps his sermon simmering in his mind all the week through, till the subject takes entire possession of him, and as the consequence, he comes on Sunday to the pulpit to preach with fulness, feeling and power."

As for the man and his manner in action in the pulpit, Dr. McCosh says:

> He was tall, six feet two, bony and somewhat gaunt. His voice was loud but mellow; he could modulate it well, and at times it became low and pathetic.

He had before him a single sheet of paper with the heads of his sermon written on it. His manner was easy and voice strong, but not roaring. "The more easy your manner, without losing the character of seriousness and solemnity, so much the better. Vigour and birr, without roaring and bellowing, are ever to be aimed at." Guthrie always had the inspiration of an eager throng as he preached. Some who could not gain admission to the church used to sit on the roof, near the ventilators, where they could hear, though they saw not.

Another hearer says of him:

> He had all the external attractions of a pulpit orator; an unusually tall and commanding person, with an abundance of easy and powerful, because natural, gestures; a quickly

and strongly expressive countenance, which age rendered finer as well as more comely (for in early and middle manhood it was gaunt, with a dusky complexion, overshadowed by lank black hair); a powerful, clear and musical voice, the intonations of which were varied and appropriate, managed with an actor's skill, though there was not the least appearance of art.

In 1867, three years after he gave up his preaching in Edinburgh, Dr. Guthrie, in company with Principal Fairbairn and Mr. Wells, sailed for America for a visitation of the churches there. By the time the ship reached Queenstown, Guthrie was in such distress that he abandoned the voyage. A friend meeting him in Edinburgh shortly after said with surprise, "Why, Doctor, I thought you had gone to the New World?" "Ah," replied Guthrie, "had I not left the ship at Queenstown, it would have been, not the New World but the 'other' world."

In his discourse at the funeral of Guthrie, Dr. Candlish said:

> Men of talents, men of abilities, men of learning, are not uncommon. Men powerful in thought and speech are often raised up. But genius, real poetic genius like Guthrie's, comes but once in many generations. We shall not look upon his like soon, if ever.

Despite the verdict of this distinguished contemprary, the student of Guthrie reaches the conclusion that he was a man of marked talent, rather than a man of genius. His carefully planned preparation for the pulpit in no way indicates a man of genius, such as Beecher certainly was. There was a gift of fancy and

illustration, and a glowing sympathy and compassion. But the fire of genius, so far as the matter is concerned, was not there. It is as a man of talent that Guthrie is an encouragement and suggestion to his fellow preachers. His career was based on loyalty to the Christian revelation, wide knowledge of men, common sense, good education, a reasonable degree of talent, tireless industry and a definite plan in preaching. He determined to make familiar Christian truths " strike and stick " by reason of the way in which he illustrated them. He succeeded.

He had hoped to have a quick translation, like Chalmers, but this was denied him. His last battle was long and desperate. He who had described so many deathbed scenes, now learned that he had told but half the truth: " I have often seen deathbeds. I have often described them; but I had no conception until now what hard work dying really is. Ah, my dear children, you see I am now as helpless in your arms as you ever were in mine." Near the end he asked his family to sing, and being asked what he would like, answered, " Give me a bairn's hymn." Thus, with a " bairn's hymn " sounding in his ear, he who had " thrown a zone of mercy " around helpless childhood, passed over to see for himself those wondrous things which eye hath not seen and ear hath not heard, and which have not entered into the mind of man, not even into Guthrie's mind, so fertile in illustration and rich in imagination.

III

THOMAS CHALMERS

A PROPOSITIONAL PREACHER

THE most marked mathematical forehead I ever met with—being far wider across the eyebrows than either Mr. Playfair's or Mr. Leslie's." So thought Walter Scott's biographer, John Gibson Lockhart, as he sat one Sabbath in the Tron Church, observing the countenance of the great preacher. Chalmers himself, when once asked by a friend what he thought himself fitted by nature to be, replied earnestly, "a military engineer."

This predilection for mathematics appeared when Chalmers was a student at St. Andrews University, where mathematics and *Edwards on the Will* were his favourite studies. It is not strange, then, that it was the greatness of God as the Creator and Upholder of the universe, rather than as the Author of eternal salvation, that engaged the enthusiasm of the young student. Years after he had left the university we find this entry in his *Journal:*

> Oh, that He possessed me with a sense of His holiness and love, as He at one time possessed me with a sense of His greatness and His power and His pervading energy! I remember when a student of divinity, I spent nearly a twelve-

month in a sort of mental elysium, and the one idea which ministered to my soul all its rapture was the magnificence of the godhead and the universal subordination of all things to one great purpose for which He evolved and was supporting creation.

An amusing record of the survival of his penchant for mathematics is seen in the fact that, when the new manse was built at Kilmany, he laid out the grounds in geometrical figures. In his *Journal* we find him confessing to the sin of vehemence against his horse, as he was riding one day from Kilmany to Kirkaldy. The horse threw him so often that his mathematical bent began to assert itself, and he fell to estimating the relative length of intervals between each fall and calculated how far a dozen falls could carry him. But the tenth fall was so severe that he abandoned the project and told his servant to dispose of the beast as best he could, but to conceal none of his faults. A horse with such a record found no buyers, and Chalmers finally traded him to a neighbour for a volume of Baxter. Whether it was the *Saints' Rest* is not related.

About the year 1790, if you and I had chanced to wander around the schoolhouse of the parish of Anstruther (spoken Anster) on the southeast coast of the country of Fife, we might have come upon a big-eyed lad of ten sitting in the coal-hole and studying in its dirt and gloom the lessons for the neglect of which he had been banished to that place of punishment. Not long, however, will he have to stay in that pit, for although he often neglects his lessons he can get them

very quickly and very thoroughly when once he applies himself to them. The lad in the coal-hole is none other than Thomas Chalmers. His great-grandfather was the minister of Elie, but his father and grandfather were ship owners and general merchants in the village of Anstruther. He was born on March 17, 1780, being the sixth of fourteen children.

At an early age Chalmers showed a marked leaning towards the pulpit, for when he was only three he was found one evening walking up and down in the nursery and repeating the words of David's lament, "*O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!*" And as a child he would often get into a chair and preach to his brothers and sisters, taking for a text, "*Let brotherly love continue.*" At twelve years he was matriculated at St. Andrews University. There, in that venerable university whose walls are washed by the blue waters of the North Sea, and whose town is filled with the memories of Knox, Wishart and Hamilton, the future king of the Scottish pulpit commenced his intellectual preparation.

Even as a college youth, he gave promise of his future power. It was a custom for the students in theology to lead the public prayers in the university hall, and the people of the town would flock to the hall to hear the prayers of this lad of sixteen. During these years he wrote a composition on the enthusiasm of Christianity. In November, 1842, more than forty years after the eulogy was penned, Chalmers and four hundred ministers of the Established Church were met in convocation at Edinburgh to deliberate on the dis-

ruption which was to cost them their homes and their living. It was a great day in the history of the Church in Scotland, indeed, of the whole Church, and when their leader sought to stir them to an enthusiasm equal to the occasion, he turned to that essay of college days and pronounced it with an effect that was overwhelming.

The first two winters after leaving St. Andrews were spent in Edinburgh, where he took a particular interest in chemistry. His first stated preaching was as an assistant in the winter of 1801-2 in the parish of Cavers, on the banks of the Teviot. Few records remain of his work and experiences there, but the conclusion of his farewell sermon has these sentences on the satisfactions of religion: "You are in a world of care and suffering. . . . Hold fast to religion. It will console you amid the ills and perplexities of life; it will be unto you as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land; it will bless you in the evening of your days, and conduct you to the glories of an eternal world." In the autumn of 1804, he received the appointment as minister of the parish of Kilmany, and at the same time was appointed to the Mathematical Assistantship at St. Andrews.

The traveller crossing the great bridge over the Firth of Tay into Dundee, on a clear day will be able to see a sheltered and fertile valley not far from the Fifeshire coast. Into this valley Chalmers went as minister of the parish of Kilmany. It was an agricultural community and numbered about one hundred and fifty families. Here Chalmers was ordained in May, 1803.

During these first years of Chalmers' ministry at Kilmany, Europe was in the midst of a mighty conflict with France and Napoleonism. At the very outset of his career, Chalmers saw in Bonaparte the destroyer of the liberties of Europe. The dread of invasion hung over Britain and the pulpits of the land rang with martial and patriotic exhortations. But few sermons could have been more stirring than that delivered at Kilmany by Chalmers, and which concluded with the following sentences:

> May that day when Bonaparte ascends the throne of Britain be the last of my existence; may I be the first to ascend the scaffold he erects to extinguish the worth and spirit of the country; may my blood mingle with the blood of patriots; and may I die at the foot of that altar on which British independence is to be the victim.

There was the ardent spirit of the young patriot. But when we read this let us remember that one of the noblest addresses ever made in behalf of peace and against war was the sermon preached by Chalmers upon the conclusion of peace with France. How like the fears and hopes of men in the World War were the fears and hopes of men then, when Britain was menaced not by German invasion but by the restless ambition of Napoleon. What better description of the relief and triumph of our own great day than those words of Chalmers when Napoleon fell:

> The whole of Europe is now at rest from the tempest which convulsed it—and a solemn treaty with all its adjustments and all its guarantees, promises a firm perpetuity to

the repose of the world. We have long fought for a happier order of things, and at length we have established it. That gigantic ambition which stalked in triumph over the oldest and firmest of our monarchies, is now laid—and can never again burst forth from the confinement of its prisonhold to waken a new uproar and to send forth new troubles over the face of a desolated world.

The quiet of his retreat at Kilmany was broken by a visit to London, where Chalmers heard and met many of the notable men of the day. Soon after his return he published his first book, a treatise on economics, well received by students of that science. By this time, it will be apparent to all who read these lines that the ministerial duties of Chalmers were his last consideration. They were discharged perfunctorily, and it was not unnatural that his ministry had excited little note or comment. His thirst for scientific eminence and literary fame put all other work and occupation into the background. But Chalmers was on the border of a great change. " God," said a New England philosopher, " enters every man's life by a private door." He entered Chalmers' life by the door of sickness. His Christianity was light and superficial and his theology was nothing more than a proclamation of morality. This enthusiast in science and this lecturer in mathematics and chemistry and this writer of books on economics was twenty-nine years of age, when, in the summer of 1809, he was stricken with a grave illness. For four months he never left his room and for almost a year was absent from his pulpit. He found that his ethical view of Christianity could not stand the

scrutiny of the sick room and left him but a broken sword with which to ward off the blow of death. Feeling that he was soon to die, the unseen and the eternal began to displace the shadows which he had been pursuing. He resolved, if spared, to change his whole manner of life, and to devote all his energy and all his talent to the service of God and to train himself for eternity.

At this time he began to write the *Journal* which must rank with the classics of devotion as a masterpiece of self-scrutiny and self-dedication, for it marks the course his troubled soul took in passing from the darkness of self-righteousness and vague morality into that light which shines for him who at length plants his feet upon the Rock of Ages. Let me quote his son-in-law and his biographer, Hanna:

> Looking through the dimness we have been able only to discern a wasted invalid, lying with a volume of Lardner or Voltaire or Pascal spread out before him, rising to pace his room with weak and tottering step; wearied with the brief effort, reclining again, getting one or another of his sisters to read to him, or sending over to Galdry for Mr. Smith to wile away an evening hour by parish gossip, or by engaging in a game of cards. But there are hours of stillness and seclusion in that chamber, when the tread of the last enemy is heard at the door, and when the spirit, stirred up at the sound, revolves and re-revolves its eternal destinies. Into these no light can guide us; we can but wait and watch for the precious fruit they are afterwards to bear.

Suffice it to say that out of that sickness Chalmers came forth with the oil of consecration upon his mighty brow. As Lord Roseberry phrased it in the address

delivered in Glasgow upon the one hundredth anniversary of his settlement in that city, "An illness lifted him into a higher sphere, and he soared aloft. There he remained to the end in communion with the Divine." We find this entry in his diary for May 6: "Preached this Sunday, after a retirement of thirty-one weeks from all public duty, and have not felt myself the worse of it. Gracious God! reveal to me the importance and the extent of my duties, and may the glory and interest of religion be all my exertion and all my joy."

His life henceforth is an answer to that prayer, and we behold a great and commanding personality, the sole object of whose exertion and interest is the glory of religion. He who had given all his time to chemistry and mathematics and economics, now, with deep contrition for the past neglect, began the systematic study of the Bible. One of his most frequent visitors was a neighbour, John Bonthron. Being admitted to easy familiarity with Chalmers, he once said to him, "I find you aye busy, sir, with one thing or another, but come when I may, I never find you at your studies for the Sabbath." "Oh, an hour or two on the Saturday evening is quite enough for that," was the minister's reply. But now all was different, and always on entering the manse, John found the minister poring over the pages of the Bible. The contrast was so great that he said to him on one occasion, "I never come in now, sir, but I find you aye at your Bible." "All too little, John, all too little," was the significant reply.

The change was soon to show itself in the Kilmany church. His sermons now burned with a zeal that hitherto had been absent. The greatness and the glory of the atonement seized upon his soul and that enthusiasm quickly communicated itself to others. The scanty congregation was multiplied until the church could not contain them and the fame of this fiery evangelist began to spread far and wide. What the burden of his preaching was, this anecdote will describe: Two young men who had heard him preach one day met as the congregation dispersed. The one said to his friend, " Did you feel anything particularly in church today? I never felt myself to be a lost sinner until today, while listening to that sermon." " It is very strange," said his companion, " it was just the same with me." It was proposed that they kneel in prayer beneath the shade of a nearby tree. There they poured out their souls to God. Both dated their conversion from that day. For years they kept up the practice, kneeling together, each day, in that trysting place of the soul.

The change that came over the preaching of Chalmers is best described for us by Chalmers himself in one of the farewell addresses when he was leaving Kilmany:

> The interesting fact is, that during the whole of that period in which I made no attempt against the natural enmity of the mind to God, I certainly did press the reformations of honour and truth and integrity among my people, but I never once heard of any such reformations having been effected amongst them. I am not sensible that all the

vehemence with which I urged the virtues and the proprieties of social life had the weight of a feather on the moral habits of my parishioners.

And it was not till I got impressed by the utter alienation of the heart in all its desires and affections from God; it was not till reconciliation to Him became the distinct and the prominent object of my ministerial exertions; it was not till the free offer of forgiveness through the blood of Christ was urged upon their acceptance, and the Holy Spirit given through the channel of Christ's mediation to all who ask Him was set before them as the unceasing object of their dependence and their prayers, that I ever heard of any of those subordinate reformations which I aforetime made the earnest and the zealous, but, I am afraid, at the same time, the ultimate object of my earlier ministrations. You have taught me to preach Christ as the only effective way of preaching morality in all its branches; and out of your humble cottages have I gathered a lesson, which I pray God that I may be enabled to carry, with all its simplicity, into a wider theatre.

Kilmany was too small a station for such a burning and a shining light, and in November, 1814, after twelve years of service in that peaceful valley, Chalmers was called to the ministry of Tron Church, in Glasgow. Evangelical religion was at low ebb when Chalmers appeared in its pulpit, and infidelity and deism wore a thin disguise. The great doctrines of Christianity were openly scorned and repudiated by the learned and influential. The coming of Chalmers changed everything. His great intellect and his burning enthusiasm brought multitudes back to an appreciation of the truth of the Gospel, and even those whose heart remained unmoved were compelled to confess

that the doctrines which Chalmers proclaimed were indeed the doctrines of the Bible and of Christianity.

One of the events of his ministry in Tron Church was the delivery of the celebrated *Astronomical Discourses*. The purpose of these discourses was to answer the argument brought against Christianity on the ground of the vastness and variety of the worlds which lie scattered in the immeasurable fields of space. This planet was held to be too mean a stage for the sublime tragedy of redemption. On every Thursday, when these sermons were delivered, a great concourse of people could be seen pouring down the street that led to the black and fortress-like church. Banks, coffee-rooms, clubs and drawing-rooms were forsaken, and all the interests of the world receded into the background as for two hours the great preacher led his hearers through the vastness of the universe, overwhelming them with the pettiness of this terrestrial globe and the physical insignificance of man, but only to thrill them with his glowing periods on the condescension of the Almighty Creator and Redeemer in coming to die for man, and to send them back to their daily tasks with the deep conviction that the chief interests of life are those interests which human salvation involves, and with the words of the Psalmist ringing in their ears, "*Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels; thou hast crowned him with glory and honour.*"

In 1817 these sermons were given to the press. In ten weeks 6,000 copies had been sold; within a year, 20,000 copies were in circulation. Scott's *Tales of a*

Landlord were issued at the same time and, for almost a whole year, the *Astronomical Discourses* of Chalmers kept abreast with the tales of the greatest of Scottish novelists. These sermons made Chalmers' name and fame secure throughout Britain. Even Hazlitt wrote of them, "These sermons ran like wildfire throughout the country, were the darlings of the watering places, were laid on the windows of inns, and were to be met with in all the places of public resort."

There was no little surprise when, after eight years in Glasgow, Dr. Chalmers gave up his pulpit and relinquished his cherished schemes of social amelioration to accept the post of Professor of Moral Philosophy at St. Andrews. He had been working at high pressure and was probably glad of a breathing spell. His own vast popularity as a preacher had begun to wear on him. At least so we judge from the following passage in which he urges his assistant in the work at St. John's to "earn if not a proud, at least a peaceful popularity—the popularity of the heart—the only popularity that is worth aspiring after—the popularity that is won in the bosom of families and at the side of deathbeds," and then adds these significant sentences:

> There is another, a high and a far sounding popularity, which is indeed a most worthless article, felt by all who have it most to be greatly more oppressive than gratifying—a popularity of stare, and pressure, and animal heat, and a whole tribe of other annoyances which it brings around the person of its unfortunate victim—a popularity which rifles home of its sweets, and by elevating man above all his fellows places him in a region of desolation, where the intimacies of human fellowship are unfelt, and where he stands

a conspicuous mark for the shafts of malice, and envy, and detraction—a popularity which, with its head among storms and its feet on the treacherous quicksands, has nothing to lull the agonies of its tottering existence but the hosannahs of a drivelling generation.

St. Andrews was the first place in Scotland where the lamp of the Gospel had been lighted. If you have visited the town, you have seen the grim column of St. Regulus which stands there as a monument to primitive Christianity and against which the storms of ten centuries have beaten in vain, and the prison of John Knox. There Hamilton had perished in the flames; there Wishart won a martyr's crown; there Knox had first preached the Gospel and, off its shores, toiled in the French galleys. Amid memories like this Chalmers laboured mightily for the Kingdom of God. He was there only a few years, but, in that brief period, there went out from St. Andrews some of the great missionaries of the Church, Nesbit, Mackay, Ewart, and Alexander Duff.

From St. Andrews, Chalmers was called to the most honourable and most important office in the gift of the Church of Scotland, the Professorship of Divinity at Edinburgh University. He was in the midst of these high tasks when the great crisis arose which ended in disruption. The division was not one of doctrine, but of polity. There had long been growing unrest in the Church of Scotland over the attitude of the courts towards the Church. Men who were unacceptable to the churches would be presented for the living, and when the Presbytery refused to install such a minister,

the courts ruled that the livings depended upon the Church's obedience to the judicial mandates. The crisis came in the famous Strathbogie case, when seven ministers had been suspended by the Assembly for installing against the orders of the Assembly a minister for whom only one person out of a parish of three thousand had voted. The courts ruled that these seven ministers alone constituted the true Presbytery of Strathbogie and followed this ruling with an interdict which forbade any other minister to preach the Gospel, not only in the churches and schoolhouses, but on any spot within the bounds of several parishes. Chalmers, M'Cheyne, and Guthrie hastened to disobey the interdict. May, 1843, was a great day in the history of the Scottish Church. Four hundred ministers, renouncing their churches and their livings, withdrew from the Assembly, led by Chalmers, and, walking three abreast, marched down the streets of Edinburgh to form the Assembly of the Free Church. Lord Jeffrey was sitting reading in his room when the news was brought to him that more than four hundred ministers had gone out. He flung aside the book he was reading and, leaping to his feet, exclaimed, "I'm proud of my country; there is not another country upon earth where such a deed could have been done." With that great deed the name of Thomas Chalmers will be forever associated, and his was the eloquent voice that rang out in Presbyteries and Assemblies, in town halls and in lonely highland glens, calling upon the people to support and maintain the new establishment.

I have already "adverted," if I may use a Chalmerian verb, to the fact that, in his college days at St. Andrews, Chalmers had composed an oration, *Christian Enthusiasm*, and that it was a part of this college oration that he reproduced when, forty years later, he stood up before four hundred evangelical ministers deliberating about disruption, and thrilled them with his own enthusiasm. The following is an excerpt from that speech:

> Enthusiasm is a virtue rarely produced in a state of calm and unruffled repose. It flourishes in adversity. It kindles in the hour of danger, and rises to deeds of renown. The terrors of persecution only serve to awaken the energy of its purposes. It swells in the pride of integrity, and, great in the purity of its cause, it can scatter defiance amid a host of enemies. The magnanimity of the primitive Christians is beyond example in history. It could withstand the ruin of interests, the desertion of friends, the triumphant joy of enemies, the storms of popular indignation, the fury of a vindictive priesthood, the torments of martyrdom. The faith of immortality emboldened their profession of the Gospel, and armed them with contempt of death.

This eminent scientist, this political economist, this ecclesiastical statesman, this superb preacher was lodged in a personality of delightful simplicity and intense humanity. He who, in his astronomical sermons, could invade the solar spaces and tell the number of the stars, could also heal the broken-hearted; the same personality which poured forth its matchless periods over the greatness of God as seen in creation and in redemption, could also kneel in a lonely cottar's

hut and mingle his tears with the father and mother over the bed of a dying infant. The same man, who carried on a correspondence with Peel and the political leaders of his day with regard to social conditions, was no cloistered economist, but went himself among the poor and knew their downsitting and their uprising. He won not only the admiration but the affection of men, and when he was buried, his old beadle at St. John's in Glasgow, walked all the way to Edinburgh to be present at the funeral.

He was a great traveller, and lived to fulfil his ambition—that of ascending the tower of every cathedral in England. He thus describes a hostess at one of the houses where he stayed:

> She never asks the same thing twice of me, but she makes up for this by the exceeding multitude of these things, such as, if my tea is right, if I take cream, if I am fond of little or much cream, if I would take butter to my cake, when I take a loaf—if I take butter to my white bread—if I move from one part of the room to another, whether I would not like to sit on the sofa—after I have sat there, whether I would like to stretch out my legs upon it—after I have done that, whether I would let her wheel it nearer the fire—when I move to my bedroom, whether the fire is right, whether I would like the blinds wound up. To reply even once to her indefinite number of proposals is fatigue enough, I can assure you: nor is the fatigue at all alleviated when, instead of coming forth a second time with each she comes forth with a most vehement asseveration, accompanied by uplifted hands, that she will let me do as I like, that she will not interfere, that I shall have liberty at her house.

Upon hearing from a friend that they were distressed

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in the like manner by their housekeeper, he writes in his *Journal,* "Let me not think that any strange thing hath happened to us, or that any affliction hath overtaken us which is not common to our brethren in the world."

Like most ministers and most churches, Chalmers was annoyed by one of those female pests whose attentions and ministrations belong to that vague "No man's land" which lies somewhere between the comic and the tragic. This daft creature would take a seat not far from the pulpit, sometimes on the pulpit stairs, and sometimes would prevent the precentor at the close of the sermon by starting with a loud voice Dr. Chalmers' favourite tune, "Scarborough." Her affection for the doctor she firmly believed to be warmly returned. "Mrs. Chalmers, folk said, was his wife, but she kent better, and so did the Doctor himsel'." Dr. Chalmers at first suffered her gladly, but at length became seized with a nervous terror of her, and on one occasion, finding her ensconced in the pulpit by his side, cried out to his beadle, "John, I must be delivered conclusively from that woman!" Alas! it is easier to wish and to order than to be delivered, for this is the kind that cometh not out save by fasting and prayer, and sometimes not even then. This woman became possessed with the hallucination that Dr. Chalmers' wife was starving him to death, and at any moment she was likely to confront the doctor on a street corner with a supply of porridge, saying, "Come noo, Doctor, do come, and get a plate of parritch: I hae fine meal the noo." A year after he

had left Glasgow and was on a return visit, he burst suddenly into the house of one of his elders, taking refuge from the woman, crying, "That daft woman is in pursuit of me." Such women recall the watchword of Gideon's pursuit of the Midianites—"*Faint, yet pursuing.*"

As a pulpit preacher, Chalmers has few, if any, equals in the history of Christianity. He was not an out-of-doors orator like Whitefield or Peter the Hermit, or Wesley, nor a popular assembly preacher like Spurgeon, but as a pulpit preacher, speaking amid the order and solemnity of the House of God to an eager and expectant multitude, the records of the Church may be searched in vain for one who commanded the "sublime thunders" of Chalmers. And the remarkable thing is that his was the eloquence of the manuscript. The perusal of any of those strange sermons with their long periodic sentences rolling up to a climax, sentence after sentence, like successive waves of the seashore, will let the reader know that that kind of eloquence would have been absolutely impossible in extempore or memoriter preaching.

One of the events of the Kilmany ministry was a visit paid to Chalmers by Andrew Fuller, the celebrated Baptist divine. Fuller urged upon Chalmers the practice of preaching without notes. "If that man," he said to his friend, "would but throw away his papers in the pulpit, he would be the king of Scotland." Chalmers made an eager but unsuccessful attempt to carry out this advice. After several attempts he returned to his manuscript, likening himself to a

full bottle which, when turned upside down, discharges itself slowly and with jerks and stops, while the nearly empty bottle discharges itself fluently. At that time there was a popular prejudice against manuscript in Scotland, and a friend of Chalmers expressed his surprise to a country woman of Fife that she who hated reading so much should yet be so fond of Chalmers. "Nae doubt," the woman answered, "but it's fell readin' thon!"

At the very outset of his ministry, Chalmers rid himself of one of the superstitions that hampered the ministers of his day and still more fetters the ministers of the present day, viz., the fear of using a sermon that had already been preached. Thomas Guthrie, a youthful contemporary of Chalmers, and as popular, in his way, as a preacher as Chalmers had been, relates how his parishioner, Hugh Miller, wondered how a minister could come forth Sunday after Sunday with even one good and finished discourse. He tells, too, of how Robert Hall, when asked the number of discourses a minister could prepare in a week, answered, "If he is a deep thinker and a great condenser, he may get up one: if he is an ordinary man, two: but if he is an ass, sir, he will produce half a dozen!" Chalmers wrote comparatively few sermons, and recommended a like practise to his students. Dean Ramsay tells of hearing his sermon on the love of God in the parish church at Haddington, and when he expressed his pleasure to Chalmers at being present, the latter said, "I felt rather uncomfortable, for I saw a gentleman present who must have been hearing

it for the fourth time." The remarkable thing was that, bending over an old faded manuscript, he could glow with the same enthusiasm that had marked the first delivery of the sermon. People got to know his sermons and went all the more eagerly to hear them a second, third or even a fourth time.

His favourite sermon was the text from Isaiah 27:3-5, "*Fury is not in me: who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together. O let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me: and he shall make peace with me.*" This sermon is interesting as being one in which Chalmers follows closely the divisions of the text, taking up each clause in succession, an unusual method for him. It is a textual sermon and as near to an expository sermon as he comes in any sermon I have read. He preached it twice at Kilmany, 1814 and 1815, and after an interval of about twenty years he re-employed it, remoulding it. From that time on he used it very frequently and those who heard him often became very well acquainted with the sermon. Few authors have put first the books their readers liked, and, although in delivery this sermon seems to have been very effective, the reader of the printed sermons would probably regard this one on "Fury not in God" as one of his least powerful efforts. Certainly it has almost nothing of that pictorial language and sweep of imagination which characterizes the other discourses.

In common with all great preachers, the homiletical method of Chalmers was strictly topical. He never

wearies or detains with an explanation of the contextual association of the passage he has chosen for his text, but immediately gets to his proposition and drives ahead. After one has read the first paragraph or two, he knows the sermon: all that follows will be a reiteration and development of that main idea. Carlyle, in that passage where he contrasts the manner of Chalmers with that of Edward Irving, sums it all up when he describes his sermons as "the triumphant onrush of one idea with its satellites and supporters." Even the reader of the printed sermon, with the voice silent and the flashing eye quenched, gets this impression of the triumphant and impatient onrush of one idea.

In common again with the greatest preachers, Chalmers quotes hardly at all. I know of just three of his sermons in which there are quotations from the poets. His favourite quotation, and that with which he concludes his *Institutes of Theology,* was this from Gambold, the Moravian:

> *I'm apt to think, the man*
> *That could surround the sum of things, and spy*
> *The heart of God and secrets of His empire,*
> *Would speak but love. With him the bright result*
> *Would change the hue of intermediate scenes,*
> *And make one thing of all theology.*

He never preached without thorough preparation, describing his mind as "slow, but ardent," but he had the rare faculty of being able to compose anywhere and at any time. He was no cloistered homilete, but a Christian gladiator in the midst of great undertakings. Some of his best passages were penned while

waiting for a change of horses, or before breakfast, at a wayside inn. His plan was to get in five hours of study each day, and he was very conscientious about seeing that each day had its "proportion."

Thomas Guthrie was the pioneer of the modern pictorial school of preaching. But in Chalmers there is almost nothing by way of elaborated illustration from the natural world, and never have I come across anecdotes such as abound in the sermons of Guthrie. Yet in his best moods, Chalmers was highly pictorial in his language. There is a wealth of figurative language; in the printed page it is cold and wearisome, but when spoken with glowing heat we can well imagine how effective it must have been.

As an example of his method of illustration, take the following masterpiece from the essay on *Abuse of Endowments,* where he speaks of a few chosen professors, working quietly with a small body of superior students:

> They sit upon a hill apart, and there breathe of an ethereal element, in the calm brightness of the upper region, rather than the glare and gorgeousness by which the eye of the multitude is dazzled. It is not the éclat of a bonfire for the regaling of a mob, but the ensuring, though quiet lustre of a star.

Or this, from *Cruelty to Animals:*

> The whole earth labours and is in violence because of his cruelties; and from the Amphitheatre of sentient Nature there sounds in fancy's ear the bleat of one wide and universal suffering—a dreadful homage to the power of Nature's constituted lord.

Or this, from *Universal Peace:*

> We have only to blow the trumpet of war and proclaim to man the hour of his opportunity, that his character may show itself in its essential elements—and that we may see how many in this, our moral and enlightened day, would spring forward as a jubilee of delight, and prowl like the wild men of the woods, amidst scenes of rapacity and cruelty and violence.

Or this, on the power of prayer, from *Efficacy of Prayer and the Uniformity of Nature,* where he speaks of the influence of the prayer of a mother for her sailor lad at sea:

> A woman's feeble cry may have overruled the elemental war: and hushed into silence this wild frenzy of the winds and waves: and evoked the gentler breezes from the cave of their slumbers: and wafted the vessel of her dearest hopes, and which held the first and fondest of her earthly treasures, to its desired haven.

These excerpts are sufficient to show that when those multitudes heard Chalmers preaching, they not only heard truth, facts and their demonstration, but they saw pictures painted by a master-hand.

Occasionally, Chalmers took a daring journey into the realm of imagination. Perhaps the noblest example of this is the conclusion to his most widely known sermon on the *Expulsive Power of a New Affection.* His purpose is to sum up the thought of the sermon, that the mere demonstration of the world's vanity is not sufficient to win the heart from the love of the world, but that there must be set forth another

object as more worthy of its attachment. He conceives of a man standing on the verge of this pleasant world and surveying all its glories and beauties, and then looking off into the abyss of space:

> Think you that he would bid a voluntary adieu to all the brightness and all the beauty that were before him upon earth, and commit himself to the frightful solitude away from it. Would he leave its peopled dwelling places, and become a solitary wanderer through the fields of nonentity?
>
> But if, during the time of his contemplation, some happy island of the blest had floated by: and there had burst upon his senses the light of its surpassing glories, and its sounds of sweeter melody; and he clearly saw, that there, a purer beauty rested upon every field, and a more heartfelt joy spread itself among all the families; and he could discern there a peace, and a piety, and a benevolence, which put a moral gladness into every bosom, and united the whole society in one rejoicing sympathy with each other, and with the beneficent Father of them all. Could he further see, that pain and mortality were there unknown; and above all, that signals of welcome were hung out, and an avenue of communication was made for him—perceive you not, that what was before the wilderness, would become the land of invitation; and that now the world would be the wilderness? What unpeopled space could not do, can be done by space teeming with beatific scenes and beatific society. And let the existing tendencies of the heart be what they may to the scene that is near and visible around us, still if another stood revealed to the prospect of man, either through the channel of faith, or through the channel of his senses—then, without violence done to the constitution of his moral nature, may he die unto the present world, and live to the lovelier world that stands in the distance away from it.

We have spoken of the order and content of the

sermons: now for the manner and method of the preacher as he stood in his pulpit. I think this can best be explained out of the mouth of three distinguished witnesses who heard him preach. Scott's biographer, Lockhart, in *Peter's Letters,* thus reproduces for us the scene in Tron Church, Glasgow, the Sabbath he was present:

I was a good deal surprised and perplexed with the first glimpse I obtained of his countenance, for the light that streamed faintly upon it for the moment did not reveal anything like that general outline of feature and visage for which my fancy had, by some strange working of presentiment, prepared me. By and bye, however, the light became stronger, and I was enabled to study the minutiæ of his face pretty leisurely, while he leaned forward and read aloud the words of the psalm—for that is always done in Scotland, not by the clerk, but the clergyman himself. At first sight, no doubt, his face is a coarse one—but a mysterious kind of meaning breathes from every part of it, that such as have eyes to see, cannot be long without discovering. It is very pale, and the large half-closed eyelids have a certain drooping melancholy weight about them, which interested me very much, I understood not why. The lips, too, are singularly pensive in their mode of falling down at the sides, although there is no want of richness and vigour in their central fulness of curve. The upper lip, from the nose downwards, is separated by a very deep line, which gives a sort of leonine firmness of expression to all the lower part of the face. The cheeks are square and strong, in texture like pieces of marble, with the cheekbones very broad and prominent. The eyes themselves are light in colour, and have a strange dreamy heaviness, that conveys any idea rather than that of dulness, but which contrasts, in a wonderful manner, with the dazzling watery glare they exhibit when expanded in their sockets, and illuminated into all

their flame and fervour, in some moment of high entranced enthusiasm.

His voice is neither strong nor melodious. His gestures are neither easy nor graceful; but, on the contrary, extremely rude and awkward—his pronunciation is not only broadly national, but broadly provincial—distorting almost every word he utters into some barbarous novelty, which, had his hearer leisure to think of such things, might be productive of an effect at once ludicrous and offensive in a singular degree.

But of a truth, these are things which no listener can attend to while this great preacher stands before him, armed with all the weapons of the most commanding eloquence, and swaying all around him with its imperial rule. At first, indeed, there is nothing to make one suspect what riches are in store. He commences in a low drawling key, which has not even the merit of being solemn—and advances from sentence to sentence, and from paragraph to paragraph, while you seek in vain to catch a single echo that gives promise of that which is to come. There is, on the contrary, an appearance of constraint about him, that affects and distresses you—you are afraid that his breast is weak, and that even the slight exertion he makes may be too much for it. But then with what tenfold richness does this dim preliminary curtain make the glories of his eloquence to shine forth, when the heated spirit at length shakes from it its chill confining fetters, and bursts out elate and rejoicing in the full splendour of its disimprisoned wings!

Dr. John Brown, the delightful author of *Rab and His Friends,* thus relates what he saw and heard and felt the first time he sat under the preaching of Chalmers:

We remember well our first hearing Dr. Chalmers. We were in a moorland district in Tweeddale, rejoicing in the

country, after nine months of the High School. We heard that the famous preacher was to be at a neighbouring parish church, and off we set, a cartful of irrepressible youngsters. "Calm was all nature as a resting wheel." The crows, instead of making wing, were impudent and sat still; the cart-horses were standing, knowing the day, at the field-gates, gossiping and gazing, idle and happy; the moor was stretching away in the pale sunlight—vast, dim, melancholy, like a sea; everywhere were to be seen the gathering people, "sprinklings of blithe company;" the countryside seemed moving to the centre. As we entered the kirk we saw a notorious character, a drover who had much of the brutal look of what he worked in, with the knowing eye of a man of the city, a sort of big Peter Bell,—

He had a hardness in his eye,
He had a hardness in his cheek.

He was our terror, and we not only wondered, but were afraid when we saw him going in. The kirk was full as it could hold. How different it looks to a brisk town congregation! There was a fine leisureliness and vague stare; all the dignity and vacancy of animals; eyebrows raised and mouths open, as is the habit with those who speak little and look much, and at far-off objects.

The minister came in, homely in his dress and gait, but having a great look about him, like a mountain among hills. The High School boys thought him like a "big one of ourselves;" he looks vaguely round upon his audience, as if he saw in it one great object, not many. We shall never forget his smile, its general benignity—how he let the light of his countenance fall on us! He read a few verses quietly; then prayed briefly, solemnly, with his eyes wide open all the time, but not seeing. Then he gave out his text; we forget it, but its subject was "Death reigns." He stated slowly, calmly, the simple meaning of the words; what death was, and how and why it reigned; then suddenly he started and

looked like a man who had seen some great sight, and was breathless to declare it; he told us how death reigned—everywhere, at all times, in all places; how we all know it, how we would yet know more of it. The drover, who sat down in the table-seat opposite, was gazing up in a state of stupid excitement; he seemed restless, but never kept his eye from the speaker. The tide set in; everything added to its power, deep called to deep, imagery and illustration poured in; and every now and then the theme, the simple, terrible statement, was repeated in some lucid interval. After overwhelming us with proofs of the reign of death, and transferring to us his intense urgency and emotion; and after shrieking, as if in despair, these words, " Death is a tremendous necessity "—he suddenly looked beyond us as if into some distant region, and cried out, " Behold a mightier —who is this? He cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, glorious in His apparel, speaking in righteousness, travelling in the greatness of His strength, mighty to save."

Then, in a few plain sentences, he stated the truth as to sin entering, and death by sin, and death passing upon all. Then he took fire once more, and enforced, with redoubled energy and richness, the freeness, the simplicity, the security, the sufficiency of the great method of justification. How astonished and impressed we all were! He was at the full thunder of his power; the whole man was in an agony of earnestness. The drover was weeping like a child, the tears running down his ruddy, coarse cheeks, his face opened out and smoothed like an infant's; his whole body stirred with emotion. We all had insensibly been drawn out of our seats, and were converging towards the wonderful speaker. And when he sat down, after warning each one of us to remember who it was, and what it was, that followed death on his pale horse, and how alone we could escape—we all sunk back into our seats. How beautiful to our eyes did the thunderer look—exhausted, but sweet and pure! How he poured out his soul before his God in giving thanks for

sending the Abolisher of Death! Then, a short psalm, and all was ended.

We went home quieter than we came; we did not recount the foals with their long ears and roguish eyes, and their sedate mothers; we did not speculate upon whose dog that was, and whether that was a crow or a man in the dim moor—we thought of other things. That voice, that face; those great, simple, living thoughts, those floods of resistless eloquence; that piercing, shattering voice—" that tremendous necessity."

My last witness is George Gilfillan, author of *The Bards of the Bible*. He tells of hearing Chalmers preach the beautiful sermon on Revelation 22—*Heaven a Place, not a State:*

Being near-sighted, and the morning rather dim, we could not catch a distinct glimpse of his features, we saw only a dark mass of a man bustling up the pulpit stairs, as if in some dread and desperate haste. We heard next a hoarse voice, first giving out the psalm in a tone of rapid familiar energy, and after it was sung and prayer was over, announcing the text, " *He that is unjust let him be unjust still* ('stull,' he pronounced it), *he that is filthy* ('fulthy,' he called it), *let him be filthy still, and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still, and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*" And then, like an eagle leaving a mountain cliff, he launched out at once on his subject, and soared on without any diminution of energy or flutter of wing for an hour and more. The discourse . . . had two or three magnificent passages, which made the audience for a season one soul—a burst, especially, we remember, in reference to the materialism of heaven—" There may be palms of triumph, I do not know—there may be floods and melody," etc., and then he proceeded to show that heaven was more a state than a place.

Browsing recently through the pages of the *Confessions of an English Opium Eater,* I came upon that passage in which De Quincey describes the preacher of his schooldays at Manchester as a man who was "sincere but not earnest." The distinction struck me at first as very odd. How could a preacher be sincere, and yet not be earnest? De Quincey explains this by saying that this minister in his preaching rarely rose in his topics above the level of prudential ethics: "He made a high valuation of the pulpit as an organ of civilization for co-operating with books; but it was impossible for any man starting from the low ground of themes so unimpassioned and so desultory as the benefits of industry, the danger of bad companions, the importance of setting a good example, or the value of perseverance, to pump up any persistent stream of earnestness either in himself or in his auditors." Then he goes on to tell about Richard Baxter and the famous couplet in which he describes his own preaching:

> *I preached as never sure to preach again,*
> *And as a dying man to dying men.*

After the change that came over his preaching at the time of his serious illness at Kilmany, when he learned to cast his anchor in the atonement, the sermons of Chalmers were marked by deep earnestness. His eloquence had the foundation of great convictions. "His absorbed and absorbing earnestness" is the thing about him that impressed one of his hearers. He was in earnest because he took the Christian revelation

seriously. The " lost chord " in much of the preaching of the present day, and Chalmers' day, too, for that matter, is the chord of earnestness. Whether because of our frequent addressing ourselves to them, or because of the deep interrogation raised by science concerning the whole spiritual conception of the world, the tremendous facts of the Christian revelation, while not intellectually dismissed, are not always felt. From all accounts Chalmers was able to continue to feel the overwhelming significance of those facts, and to make his congregations feel them, too.

Our Saviour declared that unbelief and disobedience to the Gospel are the great tragedy. The rains descended and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon that house and it fell, and great was the fall thereof. The soul of Chalmers was thrilled with the exceeding greatness of Christianity, the interests which it involved, the sorrow and tragedy of unbelief, and the joy in heaven over one sinner that repents. His discourse had therefore all those elements of pathos and sorrow, tragedy and victory, which are the ground of human eloquence. You might as well take death and hate and love and shame and sin out of *Hamlet,* and *Macbeth,* and *King Lear,* and expect to have anything that was moving, powerful, eloquent, left in those tragedies, as to take sin and retribution, and death and judgment, and heaven and hell out of Christian theology and still expect the preacher of Christianity to say anything that would stir you or move you.

Times and manners change as the centuries slip by. The mind of man turns from those great subjects and

a recreant Church neglects them for the expediencies of time, and it may seem that they have lost their power and meaning. Then God kindles the ancient fire in the soul of His messenger, and as he goes forth to speak, men see the greatness of that which they had been tempted to despise; they learn anew the difference between time and eternity, and see how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation: that saith unto Zion, "*Thy God reigneth!*"

IV

EDWARD IRVING

APOCALYPTIC PREACHING

YOU will see, now; one day, we will shake hands across the brook, you as first in literature, I as first in divinity, and people will say, 'Both these fellows are from Annandale. Where is Annandale?'" Thus, on one of their summer afternoon rambles by the shore of the Solway, or along the coasts of Fife, spake a young licentiate to his taciturn and somewhat discouraged companion. It was a prophecy which was strangely fulfilled; for the day came when the young licentiate had become the most renowned preacher in Great Britain, and his moody and dyspeptic companion the greatest of living writers and prophets. Both scaled the heights of fame; both—especially the first—tasted the sorrows of Gethsemane.

My own recollection of that same Annandale region is very distinct, perhaps most distinct of all my recollections of any part of Scotland. It was one of those long summer evenings, and my brother and I had strolled out from little Ecclefechan, with its Carlyle house and the Carlyle graves back of the kirk, through high-walled lanes, and under ancient elms, till we found an opening that led us to a high bit of land—a sort of a stone-quarry region, I think it was—with

sudden dangerous pits, and huge blocks of stone, and here and there, slumbering sheep scattered about in the moonlight. Sitting on one of these stones, we could survey the whole country for miles around. Below us and to our left, Ecclefechan; away beyond, forests that made one think of Birnam Wood, and, somewhere beyond that, Gretna Green and the road to Carlisle. To our right lay the waters of Solway Firth, half silver, half white, in the moonlight, and here and there the twinkling of a lighthouse or a wandering ship. This was the cradle of Irving and Carlyle. Chalmers, once trying to describe the preaching of Irving, referred to his obscurity, his extravagance, and added, "but with now and then gleams of exquisite beauty." When I read the phrase not long since, that evening among the rocks of Annandale, with the silent Solway in the distance—"gleams of exquisite beauty"—came back to me.

Edward Irving was born in 1792, in the village of Annan, not far from Ecclefechan, the birthplace of Carlyle, and near the border. His father was a tanner, his mother of a little higher order, but both father and mother of godly, self-respecting stock, a family, too, with sons of Anak on both sides. His first schooling was under Peggy Paine, a female relative of Tom Paine. That was followed by a term in the Academy at Annan, where Adam Hope was master, celebrated by Carlyle in his *Reminiscences,* not professing to know much, but what he did know, knowing "in every fibre to the very bottom." His black teeth were a mystery to young Carlyle, until he discovered that

they were negotiable, carved out of cork by Adam's frugal pen-knife. There are no tales of precocity in the boy Irving, but at thirteen years of age, in company with an elder brother, he went up to the University of Edinburgh. He had there some triumphs in geometry and Latin, and at the age of eighteen was appointed master of the Academy at Haddington. In this town was a Dr. Welsh, with a bright-eyed daughter Jane. She evincing signs of rare talent, Irving was secured to tutor this uncommon mind.

His hours were from six to eight in the morning, and often when first arriving in the morning he would take the half-asleep child in his arms and tell her the names of the stars yet in the heavens. It was the beginning of a friendship that came near enough to something more than friendship. After a year or two there, Irving was chosen as the master of a school at Kirkcaldy, on the north coast of the Firth of Forth. There Carlyle, now out of college, joined him as teacher in a neighbouring school. He bears testimony to the rich talks and the long walks by day and night over the sands and the moors with Edward Irving. In the manse of the minister of the town, Irving fell in with one of the daughters, Elizabeth Martin, whom, after a ten-years' courtship, he finally wedded. Carlyle somewhat ungraciously refers to her as having "muddy grey eyes, pock-marked, ill-shapen, triangular kind of face, with hollow cheeks and long chin." His later account of her when she became Irving's wife is a little more generous, for he speaks of her as one who "without any notable gifts of mind or manner or appearance,

contrives to be in general extremely agreeable." No one would gather from the affectionate letters which Irving addressed to his wife that his marriage was a crucifixion of the soul. But that it was such we know from the letters which passed between him and Jane Welsh during the period of Irving's engagement to Miss Martin.

It is plain that the great preacher entertained the deepest and most passionate affection for his former pupil, and that although neither one for a single moment thought of giving free rein to their love so long as the engagement between Irving and Miss Martin stood, both secretly hoped that the engagement might be broken and the obstacle to their union removed. Froude says definitely that Irving did seek release from Miss Martin and from her family. They refused, and there was nothing for an honourable man to do but to go on with the marriage. The marriage took place some time after Irving's settlement in London. Froude's verdict on the marriage is that, "Though faith and principle escaped unscathed, his intellect was shattered. He plunged deeper and deeper into the great ocean of unrealities. When his illusions failed him his health gave way, and after flaming for a few years as a world's wonder he died, still young in age, worn out and broken-hearted." That his marriage with Elizabeth Martin "shattered his intellect," or was in any degree the calamity Froude intimates, we cannot believe. His honourable carrying out the contract with her, instead of marrying the woman he loved, though painful, was a moral victory of the highest sort,

not the kind of victory that shatters the intellect, but gives it fibre and endows it with the strength of suffering.

But it is easy to see that Irving's life might have been much happier had the way been open for him to marry Jane Welsh instead of Elizabeth Martin. With a woman of Jane Welsh's intellect for his companion, it is possible that Irving might have been kept back from the abyss of "tongues" and speculations into which he at length plunged. Mrs. Carlyle, who knew him as well as anyone else, said towards the end of his career, "There would have been no tongues, had Irving married me;" and her own life, too, as the wife of Irving would have been much happier than it was as the wife of Carlyle.

The important thing about Irving's love for Jane Welsh and his marriage with Elizabeth Martin is not the ill effect that it had on the subsequent career of the man, but that it was the first tragedy in a most tragic life. This relinquishment of Jane Welsh was Irving's gateway to his Garden of Gethsemane. He confessed that the struggle almost "made his faith and principle to totter." After it was plain that the Martins would not release him from the engagement, Irving wrote Jane Welsh a letter which reveals all too clearly the anguish of his soul, and also the Christian faith and fortitude with which he took up his burden. In this letter he commences:

My well beloved Friend and Pupil:—When I think of you my mind is overspread with the most affectionate and tender regard, which I neither know how to name nor to

describe. One thing I know, it would long ago have taken the form of the most devoted attachment, but for an intervening circumstance, and showed itself and pleaded itself before your heart by a thousand actions from which I now restrain myself; and, forgetting my own enjoyments, may I be enabled to combine into your single self all that duty and plighted faith leave at my disposal. When I am in your company my whole soul would rush to serve you, and my tongue trembles to speak my heart's fulness. But I am enabled to forbear, and have to find other avenues than the natural ones for the overflowing of an affection which would hardly have been able to confine itself within the avenues of nature if they had all been opened. I stand truly upon ground which seems to shake and give way beneath me, but my help is in Heaven.

This letter is sufficient to let us hear the "cry of some strong swimmer in his agony." A letter written shortly after the marriage is yet sadder. It had been planned that Jane Welsh should visit the Irvings in London soon after their return from their honeymoon tour in the Highlands. But Irving could not yet endure the trial:

My dear Isabella has succeeded in healing the wounds of my heart by her unexampled affection and tenderness; but I am hardly yet in a condition to expose them. My former calmness and piety are returning. I feel growing in grace and holiness; and before another year I shall be worthy in the eye of my own conscience to receive you into my house and under my care, which till then I should hardly be.

Although Irving had many bitter cups to drink in the course of his short life, there is no evidence that he passed through the crisis and struggle of doubt

which has been a part of the history of so many great preachers. If he had to fight his doubts and lay the spectres of them, there is no echo of the conflict in his sermons. His suffering was of a different and more poignant nature.

During these seven years of teaching, Irving was a student for the ministry, and at length licensed in the kirk at Kirkcaldy. A vast throng, as is usual under these circumstances, assembled to see him take his first flight. He had just commenced to preach when his " paper " fell out of the Bible upon the table below the pulpit. The young giant reached over and, seizing the paper with his great hand, thrust it into his pocket and went on with the greatest ease. This indifference to the " paper " ought to have commended him to the people; but the truth is that Scotland never took to Irving's style, and only flocked to hear him when he had been discovered elsewhere, and was world-renowned. He had " ower muckle gran'ner " (too much grandeur), the folk said, and " his chaotic splendours " were too much for them. Yet even then it was the kind of thing that you either liked or heartily disliked. Witness the red-faced baker, whom Carlyle describes sitting near him in the kirk one day, suddenly bolting angrily out of the church, banging the pew door behind him.

From Kirkcaldy, Irving went back to Edinburgh to pursue his studies. The long course of apprenticeship was over, the young licentiate stood ready for his task, but no door was open. Fully prepared to preach, nobody wanted to hear him. Ready to go into the vine-

yard, but no man hath hired him. He was beginning to droop in spirits, as well he might have done, when he was requested to preach for Dr. Andrew Thomson, in St. George's Church, Edinburgh. In the congregation, by careful arrangement, sat Dr. Chalmers, just then launching out in the experiment in St. John's parish in Glasgow, and looking for an assistant. Irving's hopes beat high, and then sank as the weeks passed and still no intimation from Chalmers. Despairing of any opening in Scotland, he resolved upon some apostolic missionary tour in Persia, going out with no connections or backing, but as the first disciples went forth to preach Christ. At Greenock, he intended to take a boat that would go south to Solway, but once on board, found it starting for the Highlands. He leaped from the deck, and in a strange caprice boarded the first boat that he saw, one sailing for Belfast. In Ireland he was forthwith arrested as a suspicious character, but was rescued from jail by the Presbyterian minister, Dr. Hanna, the father of the biographer of Chalmers. In heedless gloom, he wandered about over the north of Ireland. Once, standing behind a pillar in St. Patrick's during high mass, a poor woman plucked him by the coat-tails till he was forced to kneel. At length he was handed a letter from his father, with an enclosure from Dr. Chalmers, not one word of which he had been able to decipher. This was an invitation to become Chalmers' helper at St. John's.

This call was the dawning of the day for him. He did little preaching, and when it was announced that

he was to preach, he would meet groups of the kirk folk coming away from the door, saying one to the other, " It's no himsel' the day." This must have been mortifying to Irving, with the consciousness of his great still slumbering parts. But his chief work was among the poor, then in great destitution and on the verge of revolt and insurrection. He carried with him a priestly air that was new for Scotland, and saluted every cottage he entered with the words, " *Peace be with you!* " He had been there only two years when he was invited to become minister of the Scotch chapel in Hatton Garden, London, a poor, broken-down church, with a dispirited band of worshippers. He gladly accepted, and from the very first seems to have felt that he had come to his own. To Jane Welsh, whom he addresses as " my lovely pupil," he writes: " I have become all at once full of hope and activity. My intellect long unused to expand itself, is now awakening again, and truth is revealing itself in my mind. And perhaps the dreams and longings of my fair correspondent may yet be realized."

Within a year of his settlement in that obscure parish, and among that handful of people, Irving had reached the pinnacle of fame and renown. The London crowds fought for admission to his church, and orators, poets, philosophers, philanthropists, statesmen, soldiers, scientists, and members of the nobility were his constant hearers. It is generally said that Canning, who was responsible for the Monroe Doctrine, among other things, was responsible for making Irving the vogue in London. Sir James Mackintosh

reported to Canning a phrase from the prayer of Irving the previous Sabbath, when he prayed for some bereaved children as "thrown upon the fatherhood of God." The phrase took the ear of Canning, who declared he must hear this man. He went the next Sabbath and was captivated. In the Commons that week, some bill about the Church of England was up, and a member supporting it spoke of the inevitable connection between talents and proper reward. Canning said that, on the contrary, in an obscure chapel, he had heard a poorly compensated minister of the Caledonian Church preach the most eloquent sermon to which he had ever listened. If Canning said it, it must be so; and with that the great and notable began to frequent his church. Other men have had mobs hanging about their church doors, but here was a mob of the aristocrats of the British Empire.

Carlyle, then in London and still unknown, witnessed the meteoric rise of his Annandale companion to fame with wise misgivings, and his letter to his brother John gives us a picture of the extraordinary popularity which burned so fiercely and so menacingly about Irving:

> With three newspapers to praise him and three to blame, with about six peers and six dozen right honourables introduced to him every Sunday, tickets issuing for his church as if it were a theatre, and all the devout old women in the capital treating him with comfits and adulation, I know that ere now he is striking the stars with his sublime head. Well, if he do not break his shins among the rough places of the ground, I wish we saw him safely down again and walking as other men.

There have been plenty of instances of preachers who had great popularity with the multitude, but whose qualities were little esteemed by scholars and thoughtful men, and on the other hand, of preachers declaiming to empty pews who were declared by a cultivated listener to be the greatest preachers of the times. The unusual thing about Irving is that the tribute of the people at large is more than matched by the judgment passed upon him by the chief intellectuals of his day and generation.

What was it that Scotland had neglected that had stirred London in a way that she had never been stirred? There were many students of the man and his message who left behind them their impressions. Nearly all of them speak of the magnificent tabernacle in which the new spirit was lodged. Like his forbears, he was a son of Anak, measuring six feet four inches, and moulded accordingly. Anywhere, in the drawing-room, on the street, or in the pulpit, he was the sort of man one would turn around twice to look at. As for the impressions of his stature, on a late evening he stood on the shore of a loch waiting for the ferry to take him over. When half-way across, the master of the ferry paused in the rowing and turned to look at the waiting figure. After a moment's hesitation he turned and rowed again to the other shore, much to the indignation of the impatient Irving. At length he returned, bringing this time the horse ferry, for in the uncertain light he thought he had seen a man on horseback. Such he was, in intellect, stature, and eloquence —a man on horseback among the mob.

One of the most entertaining accounts of Irving's preaching is that of the quick-witted Hazlitt. He admits that Irving owed his vast popularity to no one quality, but to a combination of qualities, but he insists that without his great stature, he had never been heard of. "Put the case that Mr. Irving had been five feet high—would he ever have been heard of, or, as he does now, have bestrode the world like a Colossus? His imposing figure and dignified manner enable him to hazard sentiments or assertions that would be fatal to others. Take a cubit from his stature, and his whole manner resolves itself into an impertinence." With the great stature there went a wonderful voice. When he was preaching once at Monomail, in Fife, a woman at a window quarter of a mile distant heard distinctly all that he said. "A voice one of the finest and powerfullest," writes Carlyle, "but not a power quite on the heart as Chalmers' was." His head was the delight of Wilkie and other painters, and Correggio's head for John the Baptist is said to be a remarkable likeness. He read, but not slavishly, and was vehement in gesticulation.

A writer in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for June, 1835, thus pictures Irving:

> When every part of the building had become densely and most oppressively crowded, the preacher appeared—tall, athletic, and sallow; arrayed in the scanty robe of the Scotch divines, displaying a profusion of jet black, glossy hair, reaching even to his shoulders, with a singular obliquity in one of his eyes, and a stern, calm solemnity of aspect, somewhat debased by an expression indicative of austere pride and conscious sanctity. His strong northern

accent added to his singularity, which was still further increased by his violent and ungraceful, but impressive gesticulation. The peculiar characteristic of his style was a straining after originality of ideas, and the expressing them in the language of Milton, Jeremy Taylor, and the old divines; embellishing his discourse with the metaphors of poets and philosophers, and adding to the piquancy of his censures by personal allusions and homely truths.

This preacher with the magnificent head and body and the voice of thunder taught the people with authority. One cannot always follow him and will not always agree with him, but always there is the note of certainty and authority. Part of his popularity may be attributed to this characteristic. " Prophet " is the word that is most frequently employed by those who speak of him and his preaching, and what suggests the prophet in Irving is not merely the note of prediction, but the clear, definite, final, authoritative note which rings in his preaching, no matter what the subject is.

Another marked characteristic of Irving's preaching was his emphasis upon eschatology. In common with Chalmers and other renowned preachers, Irving was a first rate mathematician. This appreciation of the order and spatial greatness of the universe is reflected in his theology, where the government of God is presented in lofty and magniloquent terms. In Chalmers, the emphasis was placed upon what the Lord God had done in redeeming mankind. In Irving, the emphasis was gradually centred upon the unfinished acts in the drama of redemption, or the future of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. When one gets on to ground like this one is standing upon lofty territory, far above the

"low levels of prudential ethics." One has felt this even when listening to an inferior mind and spirit speaking on the grand themes of apocalyptic literature. How much more, then, when a mind like that of Irving's begins to range upon those remote fields.

Irving had not been long in London before a profound change began to steal over his thought as to the future of Christianity. The average Christian and, I take it, the average minister, never really faces the future in so far as it concerns, not the interests of the individual merely, but the whole jurisprudence of our species and the unfolding of the drama of divine redemption. Whither? To what end? And when? And how? The average minister has little to say here. He is like a soldier who sees only the cloud of smoke that hovers over his part of the battlefield and recks not how the conflict is going and when the victory will be won. Most Christians have some hazy conception of what is called a millennium, a period limited or unlimited, when righteousness shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. But as to the events which are to usher in that mild and glorious reign, they have little to suggest. Those who dwell much upon the subject of eschatology are generally termed premillennarians or post-millenarians, according as they believe that our Lord Jesus will return in glory to this earth, before or after the thousand years of peace and righteousness. As a matter of fact, the great majority of Christians are a-millennarian, not through the study of the subject, as some theologians may be, but through sheer neglect of the subject. They expect the Church

to conquer, they look forward to the abolition of evil and the sway of Christ's Kingdom on earth—some time and in some way, but *how* they do not venture. Perhaps the majority of Christians are what is called post-millennial, in that they look for the complete victory under the present dispensation, a gradual spread of the Kingdom of Christ, the tide rising higher and higher, the light spreading further and further, until peace and good prevail upon the earth, and then comes Christ to crown it with His own glorious Presence.

In common with the majority of Christians, that, at first, seems to have been the expectation of Irving. But as his ministry proceeded, he took an altogether different view of the world's conversion. The common expectation he speaks of as "that error under which the whole of the Church is lying, that the present world is to be converted unto the Lord and so slide by a natural inclination into the Church—the present reign of Satan hastening, of its own accord, into the millennial reign of Christ." For this belief he began to substitute the "idea of a dispensation drawing towards its close," and of an altogether glorious and overwhelming revolution yet to come, in which all the dead society, churches, kingdoms, fashions of this world, galvanically kept in motion until the end, should be finally burned up and destroyed. Coleridge is said to have been partly responsible for this change of view in Irving as to the future of man and Christianity.

All we can be sure of is that henceforth the hope of Christian victory through a gradual increase of what

is now upon the earth is displaced by the belief in an imminent cataclysm which shall wind up the affairs of this planet.

This excursion into prophecy, Carlyle speaks of characteristically as "aberration," and attributes it to Irving's disappointment in finding that his dream of converting that great and notable world was not being fulfilled, and that slowly but surely, Canning, Brougham, Mackintosh, Lady Jersey, and all that high world that once thronged his church, were falling away and leaving him a still numerous, but far different, constituency. "He was now, I gradually found, listening to certain interpreters of prophecy, thinking to cast his own great faculty into that hopeless quagmire along with them."

Irving was now entering upon a slow martyrdom. An unemployed clergyman sneaked into his church one night and carried away the tidings that he was preaching strange truths about the peccability of the nature of Christ. This cloud, at first no larger than a man's hand, grew in volume and blackness, and at length broke upon his head, when in the very church at Annan, where he had been dedicated in baptism and consecrated in ordination, he was deposed from the ministry of the Church of Scotland. But before this sad ending, he had taken another plunge, he had countenanced the attempt to revive in the nineteenth century Church, the miraculous gifts of the Church of the first century. Only lack of faith, he affirmed, kept back from the modern Church the charisma, the gifts of the apostolic Church. It was therefore with un-

feigned joy that he heard the news that came from Scotland, and soon stirred all Christendom.

In a lonely glen at the head of the Gairloch, Mary Campbell, pious, gifted, and beautiful, lay upon her farmhouse bed, sinking into a decline that medical men said would soon bring her to the grave. On a Sabbath evening, her sisters were kneeling at her bed in prayer, when the dying invalid suddenly began to speak at great length and with great vigour in an unknown tongue. Raised up from her bed, she went up and down among her people as a prophetess, exercising her gift to the amazement and awe of all who heard her. The "gift" ere long began to work in Irving's congregation, though he himself never laid claim to the inspiration. His church was mobbed by curious throngs who came to hear the ecstatic utterances, Irving having reserved a part of the service for this awesome expression of faith. The result may readily be imagined—congregations rising from their seats in terror, unearthly sounds and screaming females; one part of the congregation remaining aloof, some sad, some disgusted, finally his trustees asking the Presbytery of London to put an end to it, which they did, deposing him from the pastorate and locking the doors on him and his enthusiasts. The faithful among his flock followed him to a hall, which he shared with the infidel, Robert Owen, of Lanark, and thence to an old studio on Newman Street, which had been used by the Philadelphia artist, Benjamin West. There the Holy Apostolic Catholic Church was organized, with prophets, apostles, elders, angels, and evangelists. Irving

now begins to drop out of sight. The fashionable throngs which had gone to hear him preach and were captivated with his eloquence, cared nothing for gifts of tongues, "angels," and all the paraphernalia of his new church, "Irvingite," as the people dubbed it.

In a sermon on *The Last Judgment,* delivered when he was at the zenith of his popularity in London, Irving uttered these true, and, in his own case, prophetic words:

> And whosoever is a servant of Christ must needs suffer persecution, in some of these six circles of suffering (hunger, nakedness, thirst, etc.). Though I am no enemy to the gradations of human life, nor setter forth of levelling doctrines, I must in justice to the present argument, say this much, that the world and the Saviour like each other not; and that in any rank of life, especially in the higher ranks, if a man make a determined stand for his Redeemer, he will have need of courage and resolution to keep his ground. Perhaps those of his own household may prove his foes. For certain, the fashions of his rank will turn against him and treat him roughly; they will tempt, they will threaten, they will revile him; and in the end give him up for a wild and crazed mortal.

This was precisely what happened to Irving. When he began to speak of the end of things, and especially when he began to permit the witnessing of the "tongues" in his church, the wealthy and fashionable, and that strange personality, the crowd, forthwith began to tempt him and revile him, and in the end gave him up for a "wild and crazed mortal."

During that last year in Regent Street, before he was expelled, Thomas Carlyle, still loyal, and admir-

ing the great mind and wonderful orator, never went to his church, sick, sad, disgusted. Touching indeed is his story of the last effort he made to win his old friend back to moderation and reason. He and his wife, sitting one day in Irving's parlour, actually heard the "tongues" in the next room, a "shrieky, hysterical 'lah lall lall!' to which Irving, with singular calmness, said only, 'There, hear you; there are the tongues!' And we, too, except by our looks, which probably were eloquent, answered him nothing, but soon came away full of distress, provocation and a kind of shame. 'Why was there not a bucket full of cold water to fling on that lah-lalling hysterical mad woman?' thought we, or said to one another, 'Oh, heaven, that it should come to this!'"

Before leaving London, Carlyle and Jane, once his beloved pupil and who had entertained for him such high distinction, went for the last time to see Irving, and solemnly besought him to have done with the "tongues" and all their associates. Irving's appeal to the Corinthians Carlyle answered by appealing to God's writings on the stars and the rocks and the brain and the heart of every mortal: "It did not beseem him, Edward Irving, to be hanging on the rearward of mankind, struggling still to chain them to old notions not now well tenable, but to be the foremost in the van, leading on by the light of the eternal stars across this hideous, delirious wilderness where we all were, towards promised lands that lay ahead." And thus for twenty minutes Carlyle continued, pleading with his, to him, deluded friend; "that friend sitting

silent through it all, head downward and face indicating great pain; Jane Welsh, also silent, sitting at his right. Then, when Carlyle had done, lifting the sad, noble face, Irving "began with the mildest low tone, and face full of kindness and composed distress—'dear friend' and endeavoured to make his apology and defense," which did not last very long or do anything to convince Carlyle, but in a style of "modesty and friendly magnanimity which no mortal could surpass and which remains to me at this moment dear and memorable and worthy of all honour."

The final break between Irving and the Church of Scotland was as dramatic as any in the annals of that church. Irving was put on trial before the Presbytery of Annandale, which had ordained him and in the very church where he had been baptized and set apart for the ministry. The charge brought against him was teaching the sinfulness of the human nature of our Lord. It is a difficult question to discuss. The position of Irving seems to have been that our Lord did not take human nature as it existed in Adam, before the fall, but fallen human nature, and in that fallen human nature won for us all the great victory of perfect obedience. Against this position it was maintained that He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and the angel spake of the child who was to be born as "that holy thing." In the eloquent and impassioned plea which brought his trial to an end, Irving states his view:

> He took your flesh and made it holy, thereby to make you holy; He came into your battle and trampled under foot

Satan, the world, the flesh, yea, all enemies of living men, and He saith to everyone, "*Be ye holy, for I am holy.*" Do you say that THAT man was unacquainted with grief—that He was unacquainted with the warrings of the flesh? I dare ye to say that His work was a holiday work. Is this your gratitude to the Captain of your salvation? Can you follow in His footsteps if He did not do the work? (Here he quoted the fortieth Psalm.) "*I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined his ear, and heard my cry.*" But ye say He was never in the pit or clay. But I say HE WAS IN BOTH; and moreover that all the water floods of the Divine wrath passed over Him, and the Father left Him to mourn with a great mourning. Show me the Psalm where it is written that He does not call our sins His own. But was He sinful? No: but look ye; the very reverse of sin inhered in His soul.

As the Moderator was about to declare Irving deposed from the ministry, a voice suddenly was heard from one of the pews where sat an adherent of Irving, "Arise, depart! Arise, depart! Flee ye out of here!" Irving then arose to follow his friend out of the church, crying out as he did so with a mighty voice to those who obstructed his passage, "Stand forth! Stand forth! What! Will ye not obey the voice of the Holy Ghost? As many as will obey the voice of the Holy Ghost, let them depart." In the gloom of the March evening, with a single candle feebly flickering at the clerk's desk, the Presbytery then declared him no longer a minister of the Church of Scotland. The issue at dispute has been forgotten; but the gigantic shadow of Irving falls across the history of Scotland and of modern Christianity.

The last time Carlyle saw his old friend, the man

who had encouraged him and had said, "One day they will unearth you," was at No. 5 Cheyne Row. Carlyle was shocked at the change; an old man now, his head a year ago raven black, now grown grey, the face hollow, wrinkled, the mighty frame collapsed. Carlyle heard with sorrow and anguish that his friend was growing weaker and weaker, yet no sickness that physicians could describe. His Apostolic Church sent him on some prophetic or angelic mission to Glasgow, and there, only forty-three, his glorious intellect was quenched in the smoke of death and the silver trumpet of his voice—a voice that mankind had delighted in more, perhaps, than in the voice of any other that had ever spoken—was now forever stilled.

Shortly before his death, some of his associates in his new church asked him if it were not glorious thus to suffer for conscience' sake, to which Irving, with unutterable pathos, responded, quoting the sixty-ninth Psalm, "*Reproach hath broken my heart.*"

Carlyle's beautiful farewell best sums up his story:

> What a falling of the curtain! upon what a drama! Rustic Annandale begins it, with its homely honesties, rough vernacularities, safe, innocently kind, ruggedly motherlike, cheery, wholesome, like its airy hills and clear rushing streams; prurient, corrupted London is the middle part, with its volcanic stupidities and bottomless confusions; and the end is terrible, mysterious, godlike and awful; what Patmos could be more so? It is as if the vials of heaven's wrath were pouring down upon a man, yet not wrath alone, for his heart was filled with trust in heaven's goodness withal. It must be said, Irving nobly expiates whatever errors he has fallen into. Like an antique evangelist, he walks his stony

course, the fixed thought of his heart at all times, "*Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him,*" and these final deluges of sorrow are but washing the faithful soul of him clear.

They buried him in the gloomy Cathedral at Glasgow, instead of among his kinsfolk in some sunlit Annandale churchyard. The shadows which had fallen across him during his life pursued him even to his grave, which, like his Lord's, was "with strangers," and in the gloom and damp of the Cathedral's crypt.

If the accounts of Irving's preaching and services indicate a marvellous, and, we may say with deliberation, an altogether unprecedented popularity, and one never since repeated by any preacher, they are accompanied and sustained by the most remarkable tributes to his pulpit eloquence which any preacher of the Gospel has received in the whole history of preaching. The tribute of the people in general was the great throng that crowded about him whenever it was known that he was to preach. As for the tributes of discerning individuals the following witnesses will suffice:

Carlyle's chief admiration of Irving was as a man and a friend, yet he recognized his pulpit power: "Grand forest avenues of his with their multifarious outlooks to right and left. . . . Noteworthy always; nobody could mistake it for the discourse of other than an uncommon man."

Coleridge, with whom Irving had become intimate, and whose "moonshine phantasm" he drank in eagerly, was an occasional hearer, and this is his testimony: "Irving, the Scotch preacher, is certainly the

greatest orator I ever heard (N.B. I make and mean the same distinction between oratory and eloquence as between the mouth, plus the windpipe and the brain, plus the heart) is however a man of great simplicity, of overflowing affections and enthusiastically in earnest."

De Quincey describes him thus in his *London Reminiscences:* "He had a fervid nature, a most energetic will, and aspirations after something greater than he could find in life." Then he bears witness to his power as a preacher and orator:

> He was unquestionably, by many, many degrees, the greatest orator of our times. Of him, indeed, more than of any man whom I have yet seen throughout my whole experience, it might be said, with truth and with emphasis, that he was a Boanerges, a son of thunder; and, in a sense, even awful and unhappy for himself, it might be affirmed that he had a demon, within himself.—He was the only man of our times who realized one's idea of Paul preaching at Athens, or defending himself before Agrippa. Terrific meteor! unhappy son of fervid genius, which mastered thyself even more than the rapt audiences which at times hung upon thy lips! Were the cup of life once again presented to thy lips, wouldst thou drink again, or wouldst thou not rather turn away from it with shuddering abomination? Sleep, Boanerges! and let the memory of man settle only upon thy colossal powers, without a thought of those intellectual aberrations which were more powerful for thy ruin than for the misleading of others!

A minister who heard him preach in the Highlands says:

> My own impression of Edward Irving is thirty years old,

yet is the impression as fresh as the day on which it was made. I remember the very bend of the pavement where I first saw him; the raven locks flowing down his broad shoulders, his magnificent erect figure, the cloak thrown over his arm, and the giant air with which he marched, are ineffably present to my mind. He had come to Perth to preach. His text was taken from the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew regarding the coming of the Son of Man. I remember nothing of the sermon save its general subject; but one thing I can never forget. While he was engaged in unfolding his subject, from out of a dark cloud, which obscured the church, there came forth a bright blaze of lightning and a crash of thunder. There was deep stillness in the audience. The preacher paused; and from the stillness and the gloom his powerful voice, clothed with increased solemnity, pronounced these words: "*For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.*" You can imagine the effect.

As compared with that of his great contemporary, Chalmers, the preaching of Irving was lacking in order, perspicuity and objective. No better analysis of the two great preachers' sermonic style has been made than that by Carlyle:

Irving's discourses were far more opulent in ingenious thought than Chalmers', which indeed were usually the triumphant onrush of one idea with its satellites and supporters. But Irving wanted in definite head and backbone, so that on arriving you might see clearly where and how. That was mostly a defect one felt in traversing those grand forest avenues of his, with their multifarious outlooks to right and left. Sermons an hour long or more. It flowed along, not as a swift flowing river, but as a broad, deep and meandering one. Sometimes it left on you the impression almost of a fine noteworthy lake. Noteworthy always;

nobody could mistake it for the discourse of other than an uncommon man.

The student in our seminaries today is urged to be simple and plain in thought and speech, to address himself to the humblest intelligence before him, and he is reminded how the common people heard Jesus gladly. But here is the instance of a preacher who won tremendous popularity through his method of preaching to the superior and the cultivated minds in his congregation. I draw no inference, but merely state the fact. Here is a man who assumes the style of a century or more before his day, and in that lofty and pompous strain speaks to men of imagination and importance in the world's affairs and gains their attention, and that of the common people, too. As his popularity increased, Irving—and naturally enough—began to feel that he had a special mission to speak to the mighty ones of earth. This conviction appears in the dedication of a volume of sermons to Basil Montagu, where he says:

> When the Lord, to serve His own ends, advanced me, from the knowledge of my own flock and the private walks of pastoral duty, to become a preacher of righteousness to this great city, and I may say kingdom—to the princes, and the nobles, and the counsellors of this great empire, whom He brought to hear me—I became also an object of attack to the malice and artifice of Satan, being tempted on the one hand to murmur because of the distance at which I was held from the affections of my evangelical brethren, whom I had never persecuted like Saul of Tarsus, but too much loved, even to idolatry.

A minister who had preached a powerful sermon during a thunderstorm was asked by one of his hearers for permission to print and publish the sermon. "Yes," said the minister, "I give you permission to print the sermon, provided you print the thunder and the lightning also." Perhaps there is no celebrated preacher to whose sermons this saying more applies than it does to Edward Irving. The mighty voice, the towering stature, the grand prophetic air, the thunder and the lightning are all gone. Irving's matter is weighty, and when I say that his sermons suffer more than those of any other preacher by reason of the absence of the living voice, I mean no disrespect to his sermon matter, but the contrary. His subjects are as a rule so profound and the argument so involved, particularly in his eschatological discourses, that the reader soon begins to labour heavily and feels the need of the great personality to lift the theme from the ground and carry it forward triumphantly.

A girl who came early to his classroom at the Academy at Kirkcaldy, found Irving reciting aloud one of Satan's passages from *Paradise Lost* with so terrible an emphasis and aspect that she fled in dismay. The incident is significant, for in Irving's preaching and general attitude there is a sombre delight in magniloquent display and his prose has a Miltonic ring to it. His sermons today would be called rhetorical, so far as their style is concerned; indeed, even in the beginning of the last century, when pulpit discourse was much more stately and formal than at present, his sermons were regarded as artificial and pompous. The

preachers of our day have gone to the opposite extreme. If there is anything that a modern preacher fears more than all else it is to be guilty of being called rhetorical. He essays no grand passages or flights of imagination. This has resulted in much deliverance, so far as pulpit weaklings are concerned. But it has had its losses and ill effects also, for strong and imaginative minds are kept back from the full use of their powers. Take the apostrophe, for example. Out of place, and in the mouth of a weakling, it is ridiculous, but in the mouth of a gifted man, what can be more effective? Yet today it is the last form of speech which one will find in pulpit discourses. I feel, therefore, that it would be wholesome for many of the ministers of the present generation, were they to remind themselves that the most popular preacher that ever lived was that preacher who was the most exalted and dignified and formal in his utterance.

The following excerpts will give the reader some idea of Irving's handling of a subject:

From *Farewell Sermon at St. John's, Glasgow,* a sermon with no order and no particular idea developed, and yet full of the eloquence of the heart. He describes his visits among the poor, and how he treasured their tears and smiles more than all the flattery of the world:

> The manly tear that I have seen start into the eye of many an aged sire whose wrinkled brow and lyart locks deserved a better fate, as he looked to the fell conclusion of an ill-provided house, an ill-educated family, and declining religion, which hemmed him in at times when his hand was

growing feeble for work, and the twilight of age setting in upon his soul—that tear is dearer to my remembrance than the tear of sentiment which the eye of beauty swims with at a tale of distress; yea, it is as dear as the tear of liberty which the patriot sheds over his fallen country, and the blessings of the aged widow, bereft of the sight and stay of her children, and sitting in her lonely cabin the livelong day, at her humble occupation—her blessings when my form, darkening her threshold, drew her eye—the story of her youth, of her family, and her husband, wed away from her presence—her patient trust in God and lively faith in Christ—with the deep response of her sighs when I besought God's blessing upon the widow's cruse, and the widow's barrel, and that He would be the husband of her widowhood and the father of her children in their several habitations—these, so oft my engagement, shall be hallowed for memory to flee to, and sacred materials for fancy to work with—while the heart doth beat within my breast.

From *The Second Advent of our Lord and His Everlasting Coming:*

The Wonder is, not that He, Christ, should be visible, but that He should be invisible. I stand before you, as a man, as Christ was, a man having flesh and bones, as I have, even after His resurrection, as appears from His own declaration. Is it a wonder that He should be visible or invisible? The wonder is to be invisible. The Scripture then set about to explain how He should be invisible when He became man, and how He became invisible when in the grave from which He raised His body. That we should become invisible is easily understood, because our bodies go down to the dust, but that He who had taken His body, for the purpose of manifesting His Godhead; that He should become invisible, this is the problem, and this is the wonder, which the Scripture takes pain to explain. Not that He

should become seen, but that He should forever become unseen; and the person who goes to the Scripture to find the reason for believing that Christ shall not be seen again, is going to search for a thing out of the question. It is the property of a spirit to be invisible, and not of a man; but it is not the property of a spirit in a body, and the purpose of God was that His Son should be visible, in a body.

A strong vein of mysticism runs through the preaching of Irving. He once said to Chalmers, "You Scotchmen love to handle an idea as a butcher handles an axe. I love to see it looming through the mist." The following passage from his sermon on *Religious Meditation* is a good example of the mysticism of Irving's preaching, and it will also suggest to the reader passages from Irving's ardent admirer, Thomas De Quincey:

When outward nature is so stripped of its gay colouring and divested of its turbulent and noisy agitation, and the body hath also attuned itself to the mood of the soul, then cometh to the breast some of the most profitable and delightful moods, which it ever partakes in this changeful being. The good and ill of the past come before us, dressed in sober colours; the gay divested of vain glory, the evil divested of remorse; everything sobered down like nature in its twilight varieties of dress; its splendours shaded, its defects veiled, its asperities smoothed, and altogether softened and harmonized by the witching influence of the solemn hour; and our present occupation cometh up for judgment before us and we meditate its usefulness and its end. Then errors are not ashamed to confess themselves, and the soul not averse to consider them, and better purposes and resolutions are engendered. The vanity of life now showeth itself without a preacher—its speedy passage

like a morning cloud, its disappointments, and its sorrows, and all its troubles. The soul becomes philosophical of her own accord; she wonders at her thoughtfulness, and the richness of her reveries afford her delight; then she ascendeth from herself to her Creator, from earth to heaven; and haply, to assist her meditations, she strayeth to the sacred habitations of the dead, or wandereth beneath the lonely ruins of ancient temples; when the solemn moon, queen of silence, stealeth forth to rule the darkness of the night, and the stars come forth to attend her course. Then, looking up into the heavens, to the moon, and to the stars, which God hath ordained, we feel with the Psalmist, "What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?"

From *The Issues of the Judgment* (giving his idea of hell):

Now this is precisely the state of things in the nether world. There is no hope, there is no end, there are no good beings to hold the balance against evil, and there is no restraining providence of God. Were there nothing more, I hold this to be enough to constitute the hottest, cruellest hell. I ask no elemental fire, no furnace of living flames, no tormenting demons, nothing but a congregation of the wicked, in the wicked state in which they died, and appeared at the tribunal, driven together into one settlement, to make the best or the worst of it they can. Let every man arise in proper likeness, clothed in his proper nature, which he did not choose to put off, but to die with; let beauty arise with the same pure tints which death did nip, and with all its flashes and knowledge; with all its powers and policy, with all its address; let the generations of the unrighteous gather together;—and because of their possessing none of their qualities which God approves in His volume, nor caring to possess them, let them be shipped

across the impassable gulf to some planet of their own, to carry on their several intrigues and indulgencies forever;—then here were a hell, which neither fire nor brimstone, nor gnawing worm, are able to represent.

* * * * * *

Here, then, I say, is hell enough out of the natural workings of such a population without one interference of Almighty God. With what full swing power will rage and havoc. With what fell swoop the arm of revenge will bring its bloody stroke. Hosts encountering hosts in dubious battle, wounds, and bloodshed, and agony, and no relief of death. Knowledge will invent systems of slavery and arts of cruelty; and inventions for accomplishing the ends of wickedness, beyond aught recorded of in history, will come forth from thoughtful and malicious brains. All the cruel acts of man will be played off remorseless; inquisitionary dungeons will arise anew, and racks and torments for the body of men will ply their ancient works. The ferocity of Canibs, and the dark cruelty of Malays and the torturing of American savages, and Sodom's lustfulness, and the Carthaginian fraud, and Rome's tyrant grasp, will all revive. And beauty will be there to light the cruel fires of jealousy, and arm nation against nation as heretofore. And poetry will be there to compose the war-song. And ambition to league revolts; and civil warfare, with every form of mischief this earth hath groaned beneath, all embittered and exasperated manifold.

From *The Character of David as a Psalmist:*

There is not a thought which sinks from heaven to earth, or ascends in gratitude from earth to heaven; there is not a feeling which the spirit of man is capable of entertaining toward God, or one which God entertaineth to the spirits of men; that is not expressed in the Book of Psalms, in the truest and noblest forms. For the Psalmist had trodden all

paths and passed through all trials, and had been made triumphant over all enemies.

* * * * * *

. . . But the form of his character was vast; the scope of his life was immense. His harp was oft strained, and every angel of joy and sorrow swept the chords as he passed; but the music was always breathed of heaven. Such oceans of affection lay within his breast as could not always slumber in the breasts of a hundred men, yet here struggled together in the narrow continent of one single heart. And the scornful men of this world, whose life is one offense, whose heart is hard, without any streams of affection, without any noble thoughts, the scornful Pharisees have no sympathy for one so conditioned because he rules not with constant quietness the unruly host of adverse natures which dwelt within one breast soul.

In this noble account of David, Irving gives the most satisfactory account of himself, his aspirations, his sorrows. Like David, " the form of his character was vast; the scope of his life was immense. Such oceans of affection lay within his breast as could not always slumber in the breast of a hundred men, yet here struggled together in the narrow continent of one single heart."

There is a saying of Goethe, that there are many echoes, but few voices. Irving was a voice, not an echo.

V

PETER CARTWRIGHT

A VOICE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS

"CALL Peter Cartwright!"

Thus, in a high-pitched, rather unpleasant voice, spoke one of the counsel for the defense in the old Sangamon Courthouse, on a September day in 1859. In answer to the name, an old man arose and made his way to the witness stand. Although the weight of years was on him, both body and mind gave evidence of rugged power. His broad shoulders were crowned with a massive head, and his black piercing eyes betokened the warm friend or the fearless enemy.

It was only a murder trial. "Peachy" Harrison, Cartwright's grandson, had stabbed to death a companion, and a law student in the office of Lincoln and Herndon, in a town brawl. Yet this frontier murder trial brought out a great array of legal talent. Assisting the State were John Palmer and John McClernand, both afterwards major-generals in the Civil War; while for the defense were Herndon, Logan, Shelby B. Cullom, afterwards United States Senator from Illinois, and Lincoln.

Cartwright, who not only exhorted the living but prayed with the dying, had paid a visit to the youth

whom his grandson had stabbed, and at a dramatic moment in the trial, Lincoln put the aged circuit-rider on the stand.

"How long have you known the prisoner?" he asked him.

"I have known him since a baby. He laughed and cried on my knee," answered Cartwright. Lincoln then skilfully drew from the old preacher an account of his interview with the dying youth three days after the stabbing; how he forgave his assailant and prayed that he would not be held responsible for the crime. "I am dying. I will soon part with all I love on earth, and I want you to say to my slayer that I forgive him. I want to leave this earth with a forgiveness for all who have in any way injured me." Lincoln then pleaded with the jury not to be less forgiving than the murdered man had been, and, pointing to Peter Cartwright, begged them not to bring the tottering white-haired preacher down in sorrow to his grave. Upon the strength of this appeal, Harrison was set free. This was the last and, in a way, the most dramatic meeting of these two famous characters of Illinois, Abraham Lincoln and Peter Cartwright. Cartwright's *Autobiography,* written in 1856, is one of the most valuable of documents on the history of the West. Yet, in its entire 525 pages, Cartwright makes not a single reference to his political antagonist, both for the Legislature and Congress, Abraham Lincoln.

Somewhere between 1800 and 1801, in the upper part of Kentucky, at a memorable place called Cain Ridge, there was started a sacramental meeting by

some of the Presbyterian ministers, at which meeting, seemingly unexpected by ministers or people, the mighty power of God was displayed in a very extraordinary manner. The meeting was kept up by day and night. Thousands heard of the mighty works and came on foot, on horseback, in carriages and wagons. It was supposed that there were in attendance, at times, during the meetings, from twelve to twenty-five thousand people. Hundreds fell prostrate under the mighty power of God, as men slain in battle. Stands were erected in the woods, from which preachers of different churches proclaimed repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and it was supposed, by eye and ear witnesses, that between one and two thousand souls were happily and powerfully converted to God during the meeting. It was not unusual for one, two, three, four, even seven preachers, to be addressing the listening thousands at the same time, from the different stands erected for the purpose. The heavenly fire spread in almost every direction. It was said by truthful witnesses that, at times, more than one thousand persons broke out into loud shouting, all at once, and that the shouts could be heard for miles around."

This account of the beginning of the Great Revival was penned by one of its most notable converts, Peter Cartwright, the greatest of the Circuit Riders. Simultaneously, the fires of the Great Revival had broken out in Western Virginia, North Carolina, and Washington County, Pennsylvania, where Elisha McCurdy, with his famous "war sermon," preached on the

second Psalm, brought sinners to the ground as if they had been stricken in battle. But the centre of the movement was Kentucky. The herald and forerunner of the revival in Kentucky was James McCready, a pupil of Dr. McMillan, of the famous Law College at Canonsburg, who went into Kentucky in 1796. His methods are thus described by a contemporary:

> His terrible denunciations of prevalent sin and plain expositions of the only way of salvation, prepared the way for a deep interest in the later revival in the regions north and west, and for the rapid communication of its influences.

In 1803, Rev. David Rice, in a sermon preached at the opening of the Synod of Kentucky, gave an account of the revival, how it broke out, and what its nature and results were. He says the great movement made its appearance without extraordinary means to produce it, the preaching, the singing and the praying being that to which the people had long been accustomed. The first symptom of the revival was

> a praying spirit in a few pious people who had become impressed with a sense of their own backsliding and the prevalence of vice, infidelity and impiety in their midst. The revival was marked by a deep, heart-humbling sense of the great unreasonableness, abominal nature, pernicious effects and deadly consequences of sin; by a lively and very affecting view of the infinite condescension and love of God the Father, in giving His eternal and only begotten Son for the redemption of mankind; by a very deep and affecting sense of the worth of precious immortal souls; of a love to

them and an agonizing concern for their conviction, conversion and complete salvation.

Drunkards, profane swearers, liars, quarrelsome persons were remarkably reformed. The songs of the drunkard were exchanged for the songs of Zion. Fervent prayers succeeded in the room of profane oaths and curses. The lying tongue had learned to speak truth in the fear of God, and the contentious firebrand was converted into a lover of peace.

At the opening of the nineteenth century, religious life was at a low ebb in the new nation. The struggle with the forces of nature was turning men's thoughts away from the supernatural. The labour for the bread which perisheth was making men forget the Bread of Life. French rationalism and infidelity were rampant in the land. When Timothy Dwight assumed the presidency of Yale, in 1796, he found that the members of the senior class had taken for themselves and were called by the names of the most noted of the French and English infidels. The legislature of one of the states, Kentucky, had abolished prayer to Almighty God. The reports of Assemblies and Church convocations reveal a deep anxiety for the spiritual condition of the nation and the Church. Ministers confessed that their hearts were as dry as Gilboa, and the resources of their minds exhausted.

Then, in the solitudes of Kentucky, in the hills of Western Pennsylvania, and in the mountains of Virginia and Carolina, there suddenly burst forth the flames of the Great Revival. The preaching of the Word was with power and the demonstration of

the Holy Spirit. Ordained ministers could not satisfy the hunger for the Word, and illiterate frontiersmen and little children, lifted upon men's shoulders, preached to wondering thousands. In every town and settlement, sinners were convicted and called upon God for mercy. Thousands fell to the ground in the camp-meetings or in the fields and highways as if they had been felled by some awful, unseen hand. The churches were not sufficient for the multitudes, and the throngs resorted to the wilderness, where the leaves of the forest shook with their fervent psalmody, as sons of thunder called upon men to repent, and make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God.

Ere long, the flames began to subside. But a mighty work had been done, never to be undone. The nation was saved from barbarism and irreligion, and the Church from apostasy and unbelief. Instead of a godless, materialistic civilization being built up in the West and the Southwest, there was founded a civilization which, with all its crudities and shortcomings, was rich in the fear of God, the only solid foundation of those nations which endure. Those great movements of grace gave the churches the study of the Bible, the prayer meeting and the evangelistic meeting. There, too, was born the missionary movement, the agitation against slavery, and the temperance reform. "It wrought, in fact, a social revolution, whose extent is hidden from us by the fact that we have always lived among its results and do not realize with what a price they were bought for us."

Peter Cartwright was born in 1785 on the James River, in Virginia, the son of a soldier of the Revolution. When he was still a child, his parents migrated to Kentucky and settled in the "Hanging Fork of Dick's River." In his father's cabin he heard Jacob Lurton, a frontier Boanerges, expound the Gospel, but seems to have been untouched by such religious influences as he came in contact with. He describes himself as a wild, cardplaying, horseracing and dancing sort of boy, whom his father had often to restrain and over whom his mother shed many a solicitudinous tear. The gambler's passion was upon him and threatened to eat out his virtue.

When he was sixteen years of age, he attended a wedding near his home, where there was much drinking and dancing. After he had returned home and had put up the horses, and was sitting by the fireside, a sudden feeling of guilt and condemnation came upon him. The blood rushed to his head, his heart palpitated, and an awful impression rested upon him that death was at hand and that he was not ready to die. Falling on his knees, he cried to God to have mercy on his soul. His mother, hearing his cries, sprang from her bed and knelt by his side, and together they poured out earnest supplications to God. He changed his manner of life, sold his racehorse, threw away his cards, read the Bible and prayed. But still his soul was in misery. He was convinced that he was a reprobate and that mercy was not for him.

One day, he was walking up and down in the horselot, wringing his hands and trying to pray, when he

heard a voice from heaven saying, "Peter, look at me!" Immediately a feeling of great relief came over him. When he related the incident to his mother, she encouraged him by saying that it was a sign from the Lord that he was to hope for mercy. Some days later, he was kneeling in a woodland cave, imploring God to have mercy on his soul, when such a horror of the presence of the devil came upon him that he fled in terror to his mother. After a period of three months of darkness and fear, sinking in a slough of despond, he went to a revival meeting held by John Page, a Methodist preacher who was popular among the Presbyterians. With many others he went up to the stand and prayed for forgiveness. As he did so, a voice seemed to say to him, "Thy sins are all forgiven thee." Now the burden of his guilt and fear was rolled away.

> Divine light flashed all around me; unspeakable joy sprang up in my soul. I rose to my feet, opened my eyes, and it really seemed as if I was in heaven. The trees, the leaves on them and everything seemed, and I really thought were, praising God. My mother raised a shout, my Christian friends crowded round me and joined me in praising God; and though I have been since then, in many instances, unfaithful, yet I have never for one moment doubted that the Lord did, then and there, forgive my sins and give me religion.

In 1802, Peter Cartwright, then sixteen years of age, was given a license "to exercise his gift as an exhorter in the Methodist Episcopal Church so long as his practice is agreeable to the Gospel." His first

sermon was preached from the text, "*Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength*" (Isaiah 26:4). Before the service Cartwright had prayed earnestly that God would give him a sign that he had been called to preach, through the conversion of one soul. A professed infidel at the service was "powerfully convicted, and soundly converted to God, that night." At the end of several years' successful labours, Cartwright was ordained as a travelling preacher by the venerable and heroic Bishop Asbury. The qualifications, labours, hardships and rewards of the Western circuit-riders, whose contributions to the building up of the work cannot be exaggerated, are best set forth in a passage from the autobiography of Cartwright:

A Methodist preacher in those days, when he felt that God had called him to preach, instead of hunting up a college or Biblical institute, hunted up a hardy pony or a horse, and some travelling apparatus, and with his library always at hand, namely, Bible, hymn-book, and Discipline, he started, and with a text that never wore out nor grew stale, he cried, "*Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world!*"

In this way he went through storms of wind, hail, snow, and rain; climbed hills and mountains, traversed valleys, plunged through swamps, swam swollen streams, lay out all night, wet, weary, and hungry, held his horse by the bridle all night, or tied him to a limb, slept with his saddle blanket for a bed, his saddle or saddle-bags for his pillow, and his old big coat or blanket, if he had any, for a covering. Often he slept in dirty cabins, on earthen floors before the fire; ate roasting ears for bread, drank buttermilk for coffee, or sage tea for imperial; took, with a hearty zest,

deer or bear meat, or wild turkey, for breakfast, dinner and supper, if he could get it. His text was always ready, *"Behold the Lamb of God!"* This was old-fashioned Methodist preacher fare and fortune. Under such circumstances, who among us would now say, *"Here am I, Lord, send me"?*

As a product of, and a chief actor in, the Great Revival, Peter Cartwright is one of the best sources of information concerning that remarkable movement, its glorious triumphs and trophies of grace, its license and its abuse. The demand for preachers led to the ordination in some of the Kentucky Presbyteries of men who did not measure up to the educational standard of the Presbyterian ministry, and who did not accept in their entirety the Presbyterian Standards, the chief dissent being as to election and predestination. When these Presbyteries were disciplined by an act of the Synod, they withdrew, and in February, 1810, constituted themselves into the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. In 1904, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was re-incorporated with the parent body, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. The Great Revival in Kentucky also played an important part in the establishment of the Christian, Campbellite, or Disciples Church, in 1832, at Lexington, Kentucky, when the followers of Alexander Campbell and Barton Warren Stone, both formerly ministers of the Presbyterian Church, united to constitute the Disciples Church. Cartwright's comment on those who afterward formed the Cumberland Church and the Disciples Church are

graphic and, generally, accurate. For example, concerning the founders of the Disciples Church, he has this to say:

> Soon diversity of opinion sprang up and they got into a Babel of confusion. Some preached Arianism, some Socinianism, and some universalist doctrine, so that in a few years you could not tell what was harped or what was danced. They adopted the mode of immersion, the water-god of all exclusive errorists, and directly there was a mighty controversy about the way to heaven, whether it was by water or by dry land. . . .
>
> Soon the Shaker priests came along and led McNemar, Dunlevy and Houston into that foolish error. Marshall and others retraced their steps. B. W. Stone stuck to his New Lightism and fought many bloodless battles till he grew old and feeble, and the mighty Alexander Campbell the Great, arose and poured such floods of regenerating water about the old man's cranium that he formed a union with this giant errorist, and finally died, not much lamented out of the circle of a few friends.

Concerning the excesses of the Revival and how it led to the formation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Cartwright says:

> Some sinners mocked and some of the old starched Presbyterian preachers preached against these exercises. The Presbyterian preachers and members, not being accustomed to much noise and shouting, when they yielded to it, went into great extremes and downright wildness, to the great injury of the cause of God.

One of the strange physical phenomena of the Great

Revival was what was called the " jerks." Cartwright thus describes this affliction:

A new exercise broke out among us, called the " jerks," which was overwhelming in its effects upon the bodies and minds of the people. No matter whether they were saints or sinners, they would be taken under a warm song or sermon, and seized with a convulsive jerking all over, which they could not by any possibility avoid, and the more they resisted the more they jerked. If they would not strive against it and pray in good earnest, the jerking would usually abate. I have seen more than five hundred persons jerking at one time in my large congregations. Most usually persons taken with the jerks, to obtain relief, as they said, would rise up and dance. Some would run, but could not get away. Some would resist; on such the jerks were generally very severe.

To see those proud young gentlemen and young ladies, dressed in their silks, jewellery, and prunella, from top to toe, take the " jerks," would often excite my risibilities. The first jerk or so, you would see their fine bonnets, caps, and combs fly; and so sudden would be the jerking of the head that their long loose hair would crack almost as loud as a wagoner's whip.

Universalists, Baptists, Abolitionists, and Calvinists were the chief objects of Cartwright's scorn and rage. He was greatly pestered by what he called the " water talk " of the Baptists. A somewhat celebrated defender of immersion was promised a new suit of clothes upon condition that he sit through a sermon on the subject of baptism by Cartwright. The " little spunky Methodist widow " who made the offer said to Cartwright, " Do your best; if he runs the suit is yours; and if he stands his ground, and you do your

very best, you shall have as good a suit anyhow." The Baptist listened with a decent composure until Cartwright reached the last point of his sermon, that all infants had the first and only indisputable title to baptism, and that all adults must be converted and become as little children before they could claim any valid title to water baptism. Finally Cartwright propounded this question:

> Is not the church which has no children in it more like hell than heaven? If all hell were searched, there would not be a single child found in it. But all children are in heaven; therefore, there being no children in the Baptist Church, it was more like hell than heaven.

With that the Baptist brother rose to his feet and quit the assembly. Cartwright naïvely relates that he got the suit of clothes.

In a debate with a noted Calvinist and high-strung predestinarian, the Calvinist told Cartwright that he could not receive any invitation or exhortation from a Methodist, for he cordially despised them. Cartwright answered that if God had decreed all things, He had decreed that there should be Methodists, and that they should believe precisely as they did, and that they were raised up by the decree of God to torment him before his time.

On the question of slavery the attitude of Cartwright was peculiar. He abominated slavery, and one of the reasons for his removing from Kentucky to the Sangamon district in Illinois was that he might bring up his family away from slavery. He denounced all

preachers who condoned slavery, but he was most bitter against the Abolitionists, being convinced that moral suasion was the true method to deal with the evil, and that the methods of the Abolitionists would result in Civil War and the dissolution of the Union. His sketch of slavery is worth reading, even at this distance, for it is the observation of one who knew, and whose opinions were not the result of Abolition teaching:

> Slavery is certainly a domestic, political, and moral evil. Go into a slave community, and you not only see the dreadful evils growing out of the system in the almost universal licentiousness which prevails among the slaves themselves, but their young masters are often tempted and seduced from the paths of virtue, from the associations in which they are placed; and there is an undercurrent of heart embittering feeling of many high ladies, ladies of high and noble virtue, growing out of the want of fidelity of their husbands and the profligate course of their sons. Let any one travel through slave states and see the thousands of mixed blood, and then say that I have misrepresented the dreadful causes of domestic disquietude that often falls with mountain weight on honourable wives and mothers.

Cartwright had a particular aversion, not so much to education itself, but to certain tendencies which he noted in educated ministers. He claimed, what to a degree was true in that Western country, that "illiterate Methodist preachers actually set the world on fire —(the American world, at least), while they (the Presbyterians) were lighting their matches." An educated minister, presumably a Presbyterian, once, in order to humiliate Cartwright, addressed him in Greek

in a public company. In his younger days Cartwright had picked up a smattering of German.

I listened to him, he says, as if I understood it all, and then replied in Dutch. This he knew nothing about, neither did he understand Hebrew. He concluded that I had answered him in Hebrew, and immediately caved in, and stated to the company that I was the first educated Methodist preacher he ever saw. I do not wish to undervalue education, but really I have seen so many of these educated preachers who forcibly reminded me of lettuce growing under the shade of a peach tree, or like a gosling that had got the straddles by wading in the dew, that I turn away sick and faint.

When he was appointed by Bishop Asbury to a circuit taking in Marietta on the Ohio River, at the mouth of the Muskingum, where there was a settlement of New England people, Cartwright, fearing contact with these educated people, pled with tears with Asbury to send him elsewhere. "But," he says, "the old Father took me in his arms, and said, 'Oh, no, my son, go in the name of the Lord. It will make a man of you.'" Concerning the New Englanders, Cartwright says:

At the time of my appointment I had never seen a Yankee, and I had heard dismal stories about them. It was said they lived almost entirely on pumpkins, molasses, fat meat, and Bohea tea, that they could not bear loud and zealous sermons, and that they brought on their learned preachers with them and were always criticizing us poor backwoods preachers.

The great gift of the preacher he declares to be that of "dislodging the devil:"

However much education may be desirable, and however much the progress of this age may demand an improved ministry, especially an improved pulpit eloquence, I would rather have the gift of the devil dislodging power than all the college lore or Biblical institute learning that can be obtained from mortal man. When God wants great and learned men in the ministry, how easy it is for Him to overtake a learned sinner, and, as Saul of Tarsus, shake him awhile over hell, then knock the scales from his eyes, and, without any previous theological training, send him out straightway to preach Jesus and the resurrection!

Cartwright had the heart of a lion and was the very incarnation of courage, physical and moral. More than once he leaped from his pulpit platform and subdued ruffians who had come to break up his meeting. In one of these encounters he had invited the offending bully to go out into the nearby woods where they could fight it out unmolested, not wishing to disturb the congregation with their struggles. But the bully found an excuse for flight before they reached the forest. Cartwright concludes his story of this almost fight by saying:

It may be asked what I would have done if this fellow had gone with me to the woods. This is hard to answer, for it was a part of my creed to love everybody and to fear no one, and I did not permit myself to believe any man could whip me till it was tried; and I did not permit myself to premeditate expedients in such cases. I should no doubt have proposed to him to have prayer first, and then followed the openings of Providence.

Perhaps the most famous of all these brushes with the ruffians was his meeting with the man on the ferry boat. When he was running for the Legislature, Cart-

wright had occasion to cross the Sagamon River. As he was riding up to the ferry he heard some one say that Peter Cartwright was a d—— rascal; and so were all Methodist preachers; that the first time he set eyes on Cartwright he intended to whip him for his impudence. Riding up to the six men in a group, Cartwright said, "Who is it among you that is going to whip Cartwright the first time you see him?" The man who had threatened answered, "I am the lark that's going to thrash him well." Cartwright responded, for none of the men knew him, "Cartwright is known to be much of a man, and it will take a man to whip him, mind you." "Oh, no!" said the man, "I can whip any Methodist preacher the Lord ever made." To his astonishment, Cartwright replied, "Well, sir, you cannot do it: and now I tell you my name is Cartwright, and I never like to live in dread; if you really intend to whip me, come and do it now." The man professed to think that Cartwright was merely pretending that he was the Cartwright in question, and when they reached the boat, was again heard pouring out profane threats against the circuit rider. Giving his horse to a man to hold, Cartwright walked up to the ruffian and demanded that he whip him now or quit cursing, or he would baptize him in the river in the name of the devil, "for surely you belong to him." This settled the business.

In the same campaign, Cartwright learned that a whispering campaign, or rather, a "shouting" campaign, was being directed against him by a political speaker, who declared that he had been Cartwright's

neighbour in Kentucky and saw and heard him offer to swear off a plain note of his indebtedness. Learning of this, Cartwright walked up to the public square where the man was defaming him. Looking the speaker in the eye, Cartwright said, "Sir, I want to know something about this lying report you have been circulating about me." There was a large crowd gathered around. "Who are you, sir," said he, "I don't know you." "Did you ever see me before?" "No, sir, not that I know of." "Well, sir, my name is Peter Cartwright, about whom you have circulated the lying statement that I, in your presence in Kentucky, offered to swear off a plain note of my indebtedness, and I have proved to this large and respectable company that you are a lying, dirty scoundrel; and now, if you do not acknowledge yourself a liar and a dirty fellow, I will sweep the street with you to your heart's content; and do it instantly, or I will give you a chastisement that you will remember to your latest day." The crowd roared its approval, and after it had become silent, Cartwright's defamer acknowledged that he had never seen him and had deliberately lied about him. "Now, you see, gentle readers," adds Cartwright in his *Autobiography,* "the muddy waters that a candidate for office in our free country has to wade through, and well may we pray, '*Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*'"

As for moral courage, this incident will suffice. At a conference meeting in Nashville, Cartwright was appointed to preach on a week evening in a Methodist church. The pastor had been rather unfriendly

towards Cartwright and seemed to fear that his manner would offend some of his fastidious hearers. The service started and Cartwright gave out his text, " What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? " At that moment, General Jackson walked up the aisle and stood leaning gracefully against the middle post. Just then Cartwright felt a tug at his coat tails and heard the excited whisper of the pastor of the church, " General Jackson has come in! General Jackson has come in." Indignant at such toadyism, Cartwright turned and said, so that the whole congregation could hear him, " Who is General Jackson? If he don't get his soul converted, God will damn him as quick as He would a Guinea negro! " When the service was over, the pastor warned Cartwright that Jackson would surely chastise him for his rudeness before he left the city. The next morning Cartwright approached Jackson's hotel just as the pastor was leaving, for he had gone to make an apology to Jackson. Cartwright and Jackson met on the pavement, and the moment he saw him, Jackson smiled graciously and, reaching out his hand, said, " Mr. Cartwright, you are a man after my own heart. I am very much surprised at Mr. Mac, that he would suppose that I would be offended at you. No, sir, I told him that I highly approved of your independence, that a minister of Jesus Christ ought to love everybody and fear no mortal man. I told Mr. Mac that if I had a few thousand such fearless independent officers as you were, and a well drilled army, I could take old England."

When Cartwright had preached one Sabbath near Jackson's beautiful home, "The Hermitage," he was invited, in company with several gentlemen and ladies, to dine with General Jackson. Among this company was a young sprig of a lawyer from Nashville, who was trying hard to make an infidel of himself. He kept pushing his conversation and argument in the direction of Cartwright, as he was the only preacher present, hoping to involve him in a discussion. Cartwright avoided getting into a discussion partly for the sake of the general happiness of the company, and partly because he saw that the young lawyer's head was much softer than his heart and that there were no laurels to be won by vanquishing or demolishing such a combatant. But the lawyer miconstrued his evasiveness into fear, and began to multiply his thrusts at the Christian religion. Finally, he asked Cartwright the question, "Mr. Cartwright, do you really believe there is any such place as hell as a place of torment?" Cartwright replied promptly, "I do." To which the lawyer responded, "Well, I thank God, I have too much sense to believe any such thing." Cartwright was pondering whether to answer him or not, when General Jackson, whose eye had been striking fire for some time, broke into the conversation, and addressing his words to the young man, said with great earnestness, "Well, sir, I thank God there is such a place of torment as hell." This answer astonished the young lawyer, and he exclaimed, "Why, General Jackson, what do you want with such a place of torment as hell?" To which Jackson re-

plied, as quick as lightning, "To put such damned rascals as you are, in, that oppose and villify the Christian religion." Thereupon the would-be infidel became silent.

Two strange and strong men met when Peter Cartwright encountered the redoubtable Joseph Smith, the father of Mormonism. Cartwright says:

> I found him to be a very illiterate and impudent desperado in morals, but at the same time he had a vast fund of low cunning. In the first place, he made his onset on me by flattery, and he laid on the soft sodder thick and fast. I gave him rope, as the sailors say, and indeed I seemed to lay this flattering unction pleasurably to my soul.

But when Cartwright began to inquire into some of the tenets of the Latter Day Saints, and related how he had exposed some of their presumptuous and blasphemous nonsense, Smith's wrath boiled over, and he cursed Cartwright in the name of his God, and said, "I will show you, sir, that I will raise up a government in these United States which will overturn the present government, and I will raise up a new religion that will overturn every other form of religion in this country."

"Yes, Uncle Joe," said Cartwright, "but my Bible tells me that the bloody and deceitful man shall not live out half his days, and I expect the Lord will send the devil after you some of these days and take you out of the way."

"No, sir," answered Smith, "I shall live and prosper, while you will die in your sins."

"Well, sir," rejoined Cartwright, "if you live and prosper, you must quit your stealing and abominable whoredoms."

One of the popular books of several generations ago was Judge Arrington's *Paul Denton,* the story of a Methodist circuit-rider in the Southwest country. Arrington was for a time a Methodist preacher and circuit-rider, but after several years in the ministry, studied law and became a notable lawyer and judge in the Rio Grande circuit. In *Paul Denton* there is to be found the apostrophe to water, which was made famous because of its frequent declamation from the lecture-rostrum by the eloquent temperance lecturer, John B. Gough. It is possible that in writing *Paul Denton,* Judge Arrington had in mind Peter Cartwright. The incident, at least, is one which easily fits into the career of such a man as Cartwright. The hero of *Paul Denton* had been announced to preach at a famous spring where plenty of good liquor was promised to all who would attend. During the sermon a desperado demanded, "Mr. Denton, where is the liquor you promised?"

"There!" answered the preacher in tones of thunder, and pointing his motionless finger at a spring gushing up in two strong columns from the bosom of the earth with a sound like a shout of joy.

> There, he repeated, there is the liquor which God the Eternal brews for all His children. Not in the simmering still over the smoky fires, choked with poisonous gases, surrounded with stench of sickening odours and corruptions, doth your Father in heaven prepare the precious essence of

life—pure cold water; but in the green glade and grassy dell, where the red deer wanders and the child loves to play, there God brews it; and down, low down, in the deepest valleys, where the fountains murmur, and the rills sigh, and high upon the mountain-tops where the naked granite glitters like gold in the sun, where the storm-cloud broods and the thunderstorms crash; and far out on the wide, wild sea, where the hurricane howls its music and the big waves roll their chorus, sweeping the march of God—there He brews it, the beverage of life, health-giving water.

And everywhere it is a thing of life and beauty—gleaming in the dewdrop; singing in the summer rain; shining in the ice-gem, until the trees all seem turned to living jewels; spreading a golden veil over the sun, or a white gauze around the midnight moon; sporting in the glacier; folding its bright snow-curtain softly about the wintry world; and weaving the many-coloured bow whose warp is the raindrops of earth, whose woof is the sunbeam of heaven, all checkered over with the mystic hand of refraction.

Still it is beautiful, that blessed life-water! No poisonous bubbles are on its brink; its foam brings not murder and madness; no blood stains its liquid glass; pale widows and starving orphans weep not burning tears into its depths; no drunkard's shrieking ghost from the grave curses it in the world of eternal despair. Beautiful, pure, blessed, and glorious. Speak out, my friends, would you exchange it for the demon's drink, alcohol?

In 1836, Cartwright was one of the successful candidates in the election for State representative, and Lincoln one of the unsuccessful. In 1846, Peter Cartwright was the Democratic candidate for Congress against Abraham Lincoln. He was then over sixty years of age, the best known man in the State, and at the height of his popularity. Yet in the election, Lin-

coln, as a Whig candidate, received a very large majority. We would give a good deal, now, to have the record of the speeches delivered by Lincoln and Cartwright in that campaign.

During the canvass for the Congressional election, Lincoln, against the advice of some of his friends, went to a religious meeting at which Cartwright was preaching. At the close of the sermon, Cartwright called upon those who desired to lead a better life to hold up their hands. A few women and boys responded. Cartwright then called upon all those who did not want to go to hell to stand up. Everybody stood up but Lincoln. Observing him, Cartwright said, " Where does Mr. Lincoln want to go? " Lincoln thereupon arose and said he had come to the meeting as a worshipper and did not expect to be singled out by the preacher. He admitted that the question propounded by the preacher was of great importance, and "since Mr. Cartwright presses me for an answer," said Lincoln, " I will tell him where I want to go. I want to go to Congress." He went.

The first record we have of a meeting between Lincoln and Cartwright was in the year 1832, when Cartwright was electioneering for the Legislature. Lincoln was then a farm-hand at Island Grove. When Cartwright came by a corn field where Lincoln was working, Lincoln engaged him in a political discussion. Cartwright was astonished, both at the uncouth figure of the hired man and the cogency of his reasoning.

When the Democratic State Convention assembled in Springfield, in the early spring of 1860, a resolution

instructing the Illinois delegates to support Stephen A. Douglas for the nomination to the Presidency at the National Convention, was adopted with great enthusiasm. One of the delegates called attention to the fact that the venerable Peter Cartwright was present. From all parts of the hall cries went up, " Cartwright! Cartwright! Cartwright! " The venerable son of thunder was escorted to the platform by fellow delegates from his home county, and then addressed the Convention as follows:

My friends and fellow citizens, I am happy to be with you on the present occasion. My sun is low down upon the horizon, and the days of my pilgrimage are almost numbered. I have lived in Illinois during the entire period of its history as a State. I have watched with tender interest its marvellous growth from its feeble condition as a territory, until it has reached its present splendour as a State. I have travelled over its prairies, slept with only the canopy of heaven for a covering; I have followed the trail of the Indians, fought the desperadoes, swam the rivers, threaded the almost pathless forests, in order that I might carry the tidings of the blessed Gospel to the loneliest cabin upon the border. Yes, my friends, for seventy long years, amid appalling difficulties and dangers, I have waged an incessant warfare against the world, the flesh, the devil, *and all the other enemies of the Democratic Party!*

A story, never contradicted by Cartwright, tells of how when on a visit to New York, he became lost and bewildered in the stairways and corridors of the vast hostelry, and how to make sure his path, he procured a hatchet and blazed his trail along the mahogany

banisters and panelings from the hotel office to his room.

Cartwright died, full of years and honour, in 1872, aged eighty-seven, with a record of 12,000 converts received into his churches, 15,000 sermons preached, and was followed to his grave by a procession of one hundred and twenty-nine children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. A few years after his death, his widow was attending a revival service at Bethel Chapel. Called upon to give her testimony, she did so with great feeling, concluding with the words: " The past three weeks have been the happiest of my life. I am waiting for the chariot." When the Benediction was pronounced and the congregation dismissed, she did not rise with the rest. The minister, seeing that her spirit had departed, solemnly said, " The chariot has arrived."

VI

JAMES WADDEL

THE BLIND PREACHER OF VIRGINIA

IN a rude meeting-house in Southeastern Virginia, not far from the sea, the preacher had taken for his text the words of Christ to Peter, "*Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?*" In the midst of his sermon he put the inquiry, "And what does Peter say?" With that, an old sailor, whose name was Peter, supposing the preacher had spoken to him, arose from his seat, and with tears running down his storm-beaten face, replied, "*Lord, thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love thee!*" This is one of the many traditions still current about the marvellous eloquence of James Waddel.

It is not always easy to say how much of the fame that has gathered about a man of the past is due to his native abilities, and how much to the pen of his biographer. There had to be, indeed, some measure of public note and recognition before the man attracted the attention of the biographer. His name appears frequently in the records of the Presbyteries of Virginia; but it is doubtful if, today, anyone ever would have heard of James Waddel, had it not been for the celebrated sketch of him and his preaching by the

graceful pen of William Wirt in *The British Spy*. However famous the preacher may or may not have been, the account of him by William Wirt is one of the finest pieces of American prose.

James Waddel was born in Ireland, July, 1739. That same year his parents emigrated to America, and settled in Pennsylvania. They were God-fearing people, and the prayers of James' mother had a thrilling and an abiding influence upon his mind. One of the reasons for the boy being sent to school was an accident which happened to him on a hunting expedition, his hand being nearly severed by the blow of an axe, with which he and a brother were chopping out a hare from a tree. He was sent to the Academy at Nottingham, then under the principalship of Dr. Samuel Finley, who died as President of Princeton. Among his schoolmates at Nottingham were Benjamin Rush and William L. Tennent. When at Nottingham, he became deeply and definitely religious, and grounded his hopes on the propitiatory death of Christ on the Cross. He longed to see Christ on earth that he might ask Him who restored withered limbs, to heal his hand.

After a short term as a teacher in Virginia, he came into the pastorate of the churches in Lancaster and Northumberland Counties, in the lower part of the Great Northern Neck of Virginia—that portion of Virginia lying between the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers. There he quickly made a mark for himself and continued as pastor until ill-health, and the incursions of the British during the Revolution, occasioned his removal to the church of Tinkling Spring,

in the Shenandoah Valley. Here he had a ministry of seven years, and then removed to Louisa, near Gordonsville, in Orange County, on the east slope of the Blue Ridge. His meeting-house was rude—a "ruinous, old, wooden house in the forest," is William Wirt's description of it—and his congregation so small that visitors would leave the house exclaiming, "Does nobody here know what an orator James Waddel is?"

Always deficient in eyesight, his later life was shadowed by complete blindness. The rude surgery of the time afforded him some temporary relief from the cataract, and for a brief day his sun shone again, only to go out and leave him in total darkness. His method of preparation for the pulpit during these years of blindness was to have his children read analogous passages from Cruden's *Concordance* and notes from various commentaries. He then dictated the heads of the sermon which were afterwards read over to him.

> For hours he would lie at full length upon his back, his right arm thrown carelessly over his head, his long fingers moving in measured beats, noting both the vacuity and fulness of his thoughts, and the passage of time. That tapping of those fingers, like their gentle swing in the pulpit, was full of feeling and eloquence. The man of power was listless, or in a reverie, or his checked feeling was seeking some fit expression for a glowing thought.

No doubt, this introspective homiletical method had the effect of adding to the intensity of his preaching, giving the impression that the sermon was something which had come up out of the innermost depths of his soul.

A friend who enjoyed the intimacy of Waddel's home thus writes in the *Southern Literary Messenger* of the joy of the old man when his sight was temporarily restored:

The scene, without dispute, was the most moving I had ever witnessed. The father could again see his children who rivetted his attention and absorbed his soul. Among these, emotions of intense interest and varied suggestion were visible in the eye, the countenance and hurried movements. The bursts of laughter—the running to and fro—the clapping of hands—the sending for absent friends—and then the silent tear bedewing the cheek in touching interlude—the eager gazes of old servants, and the unmeaning wonder of young ones—in short, the happy confusion from the agitation of joy—all taken together, was a scene better adapted to the pencil than the pen, and which a master's hand might have been proud to sketch. How I regretted that the mantle of some Raphael or Michael Angelo had not fallen upon me; then had my fame and my feelings each been identified with the scene, and others should have been permitted to view upon the canvas what I must fail to describe upon paper.

The paroxysms produced by the arrival of the glasses having passed away, and a partial experiment having satisfied all of their adaptation to the diseased eye; behold! the Patriarch seated upon his large arm-chair, with his children around him, and scanning with affectionate curiosity the bashful group. There was a visible shyness among the lesser members of the family community while undergoing this fatherly scrutiny, not unlike that produced by a long absence. The fondness of a father in contemplating those most dear to him was never more rationally exemplified, or exquisitely enjoyed than on this occasion.

And now, the venerable man arising from his seat and

grasping a long staff which lay convenient to him, had proceeded but a short distance, when the staff itself seemed powerfully, but momentarily, to engage his attention—it had been the companion of his darkest days, the pioneer of his domestic travels, and the supporter of a weak and tottering frame.

He next proceeded to the front door to take a view of the mountains, the beautiful southwest range stretching out in lovely prospect at the distance of about three miles. All followed, myself among the rest; and the mountain scene, though viewed a thousand times before, was now gazed upon with deeper interest, and presented a greater variety of beauty than ever.

Another who knew him thus describes his personal appearance:

He was tall, thin—spare—very spare as he grew older—had a long visage—his forehead being high—his nose and chin long—his face thin—his eyes light blue and his complexion fair. He wore long white boots—small clothes buckled at the knees—a long loose strait-bodied coat—and a white wig. He was seldom vehement in delivery—often excited, never boisterous—often deeply pathetic in tone and manner—very courtly in his manners—and used much gesture with both hands.

The following passages from the exquisite brochure of William Wirt will let us see the blind Boanerges as he appeared in the pulpit:

It was one Sunday, as I travelled through the county of Orange, that my eye was caught by a cluster of horses tied near a ruinous, old, wooden house, in the forest, not far from the roadside. Having frequently seen such objects

before, in travelling through these States, I had no difficulty in understanding that this was a place of religious worship.

Devotion should have stopped me to join in the duties of the congregation; but I must confess that curiosity to hear the preacher of such a wilderness was not the least of my motives. On entering, I was struck with his preternatural appearance; he was a tall and very spare old man; his head, which was covered with a white linen cap, his shrivelled hands, and his voice, were all shaking under the influence of a palsy; and a few moments ascertained to me that he was perfectly blind.

The first emotions which touched my breast, were those of mingled pity and veneration. But ah! how soon were all my feelings changed! The lips of Plato were never more worthy of a prognostic swarm of bees, than were the lips of this holy man! It was a day of administration of the sacrament; and his subject, of course, was the passion of our Saviour. I had heard the subject handled a thousand times—I had thought it exhausted long ago. Little did I suppose, that in the wild woods of America, I was to meet with a man whose eloquence would give to this topic a new and more sublime pathos than I had ever before witnessed.

As he descended from the pulpit to distribute the mystic symbols, there was a peculiar, a more than human solemnity in his air and manner which made my blood run cold and my whole frame shiver.

He then drew a picture of the sufferings of our Saviour; His trial before Pilate; His ascent up Calvary; His crucifixion, and His death. I knew the whole history; but never, till then, had I heard the circumstances so selected, so arranged, so coloured! It was all new: and I seemed to have heard it for the first time in my life. His enumeration was so deliberate, that his voice trembled on every syllable; every heart in the assembly trembled in unison. His pecu-

liar phrases had that force of description that the original scene appeared to be, at that moment, acting before our eyes. We saw the very faces of the Jews: the staring frightful distortions of malice and rage. We saw the buffet; my soul kindled with a flame of indignation; and my hands were involuntarily and convulsively clenched.

But when he came to touch on the patience, the forgiving meekness of our Saviour; when he drew, to the life, his blessed eyes streaming in tears to heaven; his voice breathing to God a soft and gentle prayer of pardon on his enemies, "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*"—the voice of the preacher, which had all along faltered, grew fainter and fainter; until his utterances being obstructed by the force of his feelings, he raised his handkerchief to his eyes, and burst into a loud and irrepressible flood of grief. The effect is inconceivable. The whole house resounded with the mingled groans and sobs, and shrieks of the congregation.

It was some time before the tumult had subsided, so far as to permit him to proceed. Indeed, judging by the usual, but fallacious standard of my own weakness, I began to be very uneasy for the situation of the preacher. For I could not conceive how he would be able to let his audience down from the height to which he had wound them, without impairing the solemnity and dignity of his subject, or perhaps shocking them by the abruptness of the fall. But no; the descent was as beautiful and sublime, as the elevation had been rapid and enthusiastic.

The first sentence with which he broke the awful silence was a quotation from Rousseau—"Socrates died like a philosopher, but Jesus Christ like a God!"

I despair of giving you any idea of the effect produced by this short sentence, unless you can perfectly conceive the whole manner of the man, as well as the peculiar crisis in the discourse. . . . You are to imagine that you hear his slow, solemn, well accented enunciation, his voice of affect-

ing trembling melody; you are to remember the pitch of passion and enthusiasm to which the congregation were raised; and then, the few minutes of portentous, death-like silence which reigned throughout the house; the preacher removing his white handkerchief from his aged face (even yet wet from the recent torrent of his tears), and slowly stretching forth the palsied hand which holds it, begins the sentence—" Socrates died like a philosopher "—then pausing, raising his other hand, pressing them both clasped together, with warmth and energy to his breast, lifting his " sightless balls " to heaven, and pouring his whole soul into his tremulous voice—" but Jesus Christ—like a God! " If he had been indeed and in truth an angel of light, the effect could scarcely have been more divine.

Whatever I had been able to conceive of the sublimity of Massillon, or the force of Bourdaloue, had fallen far short of the power which I felt from the delivery of this simple sentence. The blood, which just before had rushed in a hurricane upon my brain, and in the violence and agony of my feelings, had held my whole system in suspense, now ran back into my heart, with a sensation which I cannot describe—a kind of shuddering, delicious horror! The paroxysm of blended piety and indignation to which I had been transported, subsided into the deepest self-abasement, humility and adoration. I had just been lacerated and dissolved by sympathy, for our Saviour as a fellow-creature; but now, with fear and trembling, I adored him as—" a God! "

This man has been before my imagination almost ever since. A thousand times, as I rode along, I dropped the reins of my bridle, stretched forth my hand, and tried to imitate his quotation from Rousseau; a thousand times I abandoned the attempt in despair, and felt persuaded that his peculiar manner and power arose from an energy of soul, which nature could give, but which no human being could justly copy. In short, he seems to be altogether a

being of a former age, or of a totally different nature from the rest of men.

Guess my surprise, when, on my arrival at Richmond, and mentioning the name of this man, I found not one person who had ever heard of James Waddel. Is it not strange, that such a genius as this, so accomplished a scholar, so divine an orator, should be permitted to languish and die in obscurity within eighty miles of the metropolis of Virginia?

It is now clear that this "so accomplished scholar and so divine an orator" was not a prophet so little honoured and known as the words of Wirt's eulogy would lead us to suppose. He was well known, and seems to have been one of the celebrities of the Church in Virginia. James Madison, President of the United States, was a neighbour and a frequent hearer, and the leading men of the day were often seen in his house. Patrick Henry knew his preaching well, and thought that Waddel and Samuel Davies were the greatest orators of the day.

When Waddel, then a teacher and expecting to study medicine, came on a visit to Virginia and met Samuel Davies, the great Colonial orator and preacher, the latter, struck with the talent of the young man, insisted that he remain in Virginia and study theology. Thus one great preacher introduced another to his work. The following excerpt from the diary of Waddel shows how times and customs change: "A brig appeared in the harbour this morning, with a number of casks of rum on board. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!"

The reader of Wirt's sketch is tempted to wonder

how much of it is pure poetic imagination, and how much fact. One of the sons-in-law of Waddel asked Wirt that very question at Baltimore, in 1830. Wirt responded that he may have drawn on imagination for time, place, and occasion, and that what he had heard by the fireside may have been introduced into the sermon from the pulpit; but that so far as the eloquence and impression of his sermons were concerned, the sketch, far from being an exaggeration, had fallen short of the truth. Wirt himself knew Waddel and was frequently in his home, though one might assume from his eulogy that he had never seen him before. A copy of the article by Wirt was sent to Dr. Waddel and the old man was much grieved with it.

The sun was setting on a summer's day in 1801, when a young Presbyterian minister who had recently resigned the presidency of Hampden-Sidney College, and was on his way to the meeting of the General Assembly at Philadelphia, reined in his horse at a Virginia cross-roads and deliberated as to whether he should take the road leading to the home of John Todd or James Waddel. He chose the road that led him to the door of the blind preacher. It was a trifling incident, yet one of those little events in a man's life upon which great issues turn. The young man was none other than Archibald Alexander. He found Waddel's charming daughter, Janetta, reading to her father, and helping him in the preparation of his sermons. In the following April, Janetta became the wife of Archibald Alexander, the first professor of Princeton Theological Seminary.

Writing from Princeton in 1848, Dr. Archibald Alexander says that he heard his celebrated father-in-law preach only once. His subject was the Pharisee and the Publican, and he recalled how Waddel gave a vivid description of the Pharisee, not as the narrative paints him, but as he appeared to the people, a man of probity and high character. Alexander also speaks of hearing Waddel defend an accused minister before a meeting of the Hanover Presbytery. He says it was the most moving piece of eloquence he ever heard. A learned elder who was present said he had heard Patrick Henry at his best, and that this speech by Waddel was a perfect specimen of eloquence. Before his death, Waddel left directions that all his manuscripts should be burned. There are, therefore, no specimens of his sermons extant. The sermon reported by Wirt is probably, so far as the matter is concerned, more that of Wirt than that of Waddel. Old Father Mitchell once said to Waddel's grandson, James Waddel Alexander, "When other men preach, one looks to see who is affected; when Dr. Waddel preached those who were *not* affected were the exception. Whole congregations were bathed in tears."

There are many anecdotes, carried down to us on the river of tradition, which tell of the remarkable effect this man's preaching had upon those who sat under him. Doubtless, these are preserved in households in Virginia and elsewhere unto the present day. His grandson, James Waddel Alexander, speaks of the great number that were current in his day. We wish, albeit vainly, that we might

come upon some of them in our day. Yet enough remains to let us know that here was a real Boanerges —one able to sweep with a master's touch all the strings of that harp which God hath hung within the breast of man.

VII

GILBERT TENNENT

THE PREACHER OF A FAMOUS SERMON

IN his history of the Log College, Archibald Alexander says, "The Presbyterian Church is probably not more indebted for her prosperity and for the evangelical spirit which has generally pervaded her body to any individual than to the elder Tennent." That elder Tennent, the Rev. William, was a native of Ireland, and probably received his education at Trinity College, Dublin. He took orders in the Episcopal Church of Ireland, but was never settled over a parish. In 1716, he migrated to America, bringing with him one daughter, and four sons, all of whom became ministers of the Presbyterian Church. In 1718, Tennent was regularly received as a minister of the Presbyterian Church by the Synod of Philadelphia. In 1726, he became pastor of the church at Neshaminy, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, where he remained for the rest of his life. There it was that, within a few steps of his own dwelling-place, he erected the building which is generally regarded as the head-waters of the stream of academic training among Presbyterians in America, the Log College.

Whitefield's *Journal* tells of a visit paid him by this

William Tennent. "At my return home (Philadelphia) was much comforted by the coming of one Mr. Tennent, an old grey-headed disciple and soldier of Jesus Christ. He keeps an academy about twenty miles from Philadelphia, and has been blessed with four gracious sons, three of which have been, and still continue to be, eminently useful in the Church of Christ. He is a great friend of Mr. Erskine, of Scotland, and, as far as I can learn, both he and his sons are secretly despised by the generality of the Synod, as Mr. Erskine and his friends are hated by the judicatories of Edinboro, and as the Methodist preachers are by their brethren in England." Of the Log College, Whitefield has this to say:

> The place wherein the young men study now is in contempt called the College. It is a log house about twenty feet long and near as many broad, and to me it seemed to resemble the school of the old prophets, for their habitations were mean; and that they sought not great things for themselves is plain from those passages in Scripture wherein we are told that each of them took them a beam to build them a house, and that at the feast of the sons of the prophets, one of them put on the pot, while the others went to fetch some herbs out of the fields. All that we can say of most of our universities is—they are glorious without. From this despised place seven or eight worthy ministers of Jesus have lately been sent forth; more are almost ready to be sent and the foundation is now laying for the instruction of many others.

The youngest and least conspicuous of the four sons of William Tennent was Charles, who, like his brothers, was educated by his own father, and became

minister of a church in Delaware. The next youngest son, John, became minister in 1730 of the Presbyterian Congregation not far from Freehold, New Jersey, a congregation which had been established by the Scottish survivors of the ship "Caledonia," which had been wrecked on the Jersey coast. After a brief, but notable ministry, John Tennent died in 1732, and was honoured with an epitaph from the pen of the Rev. Jonathan Dickinson.

John Tennent was succeeded in the pastorate at Freehold by the next oldest brother, William. Of this son, Dr. Alexander writes: "We have never known a man in modern times concerning whom so many extraordinary things are related."

One of these extraordinary things to which Dr. Alexander refers is how, one night, when Mr. Tennent was asleep in his bed, he was awakened by a sharp pain in the region of the toes of one of his feet. When a light was struck he discovered that several of his toes had been cut entirely off, as if by some sharp instrument. "But though the wounded part was bleeding, nothing was seen of the exscinded members, nor any means by which such a dismemberment could have been effected." Some supposed that the injury had been effected by the bite of a hungry and voracious rat or a mad cat. But this was discounted, because the wound showed no mark of the gnawing of such an animal. Tennent, himself, constantly believed that the injury was done by the Prince of Darkness. Dr. Alexander contributes his own opinion about this strange happening, to the effect that Mr. Tennent

was probably a somnambulist, and received this injury by treading in his rambles on some sharp instrument, soon after which he returned to his bed, but did not feel the pain of the wound until he awoke. This opinion, Dr. Alexander backs up with interesting memorabilia of sleep-walkers.

Of an altogether different nature is the well-attested story of William Tennent's trance. He was with his brother, then a pastor at New Brunswick, New Jersey, and, under his tutelage, was preparing himself for examination before Presbytery. One morning, when conversing with his brother in Latin on the state of his soul, he fainted and apparently died. According to the practise of the day, the funeral was fixed for the next day, and the neighbourhood invited. In the evening, his physician and friend returned from a ride in the country, and could not be persuaded that the young man was dead. Against the protests of his brother, Gilbert, he had the body restored to a warm bed and insisted that the people, who had been invited to the funeral, should be requested not to attend. On the third day there was no sign of a recovery, and the people were again invited, and had assembled to attend the funeral. The doctor still objected, and confined his request for delay to one hour, then to half an hour and finally to a quarter of an hour. He was engaged in putting some ointments upon the apparently dead man's tongue, when his brother Gilbert came in and remarked, "It is shameful to be feeding a lifeless corpse," and insisted they proceed with the funeral.

At that moment, to the alarm and astonishment of

all present, the body opened its eyes, gave a dreadful groan and sunk again into apparent death. Under vigorous means, resuscitation was brought about in the course of an hour or two. After lying for six weeks in a very low state, Tennent recovered, so that he was able to walk about the room. All knowledge seemed to have departed from him during this period of unconsciousness, and he was not able to read a single word. But one day, reciting a lesson in Latin, he suddenly clasped his hands to his head, as if something had hurt him, and made a pause. After this shock, his recollection was restored and his memory revived, so that he had a perfect knowledge of the past transactions of his life.

Several times William Tennent was importuned to give an account of his experience. Although reluctant to do so, he complied. In brief, his story is as follows:

> While I was conversing with my brother on the state of my soul and the fears I had entertained for my future welfare, I found myself in an instant, in another state of existence, under the direction of a Superior Being, who ordered me to follow Him. I was accordingly wafted along, I know not how, till I beheld at a distance an ineffable glory, the impression of which on my mind it is impossible to communicate to mortal man. I immediately reflected upon my happy change and thought: "Well, blessed be God! I am safe, at last, notwithstanding all my fears."
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> I saw an innumerable host of happy beings surrounding the inexpressible glory, in acts of adoration and joyous worship, but I did not see any bodily shape, or representation, in the glorious appearance. I heard things unutterable; I heard songs and hallelujahs of thanksgiving and praise, voiced with unspeakable rapture. I felt joy unutterable, and full of glory. I then applied to my con-

ductor and requested leave to join the happy throng, on which he tapped me on the shoulder and said, " You must return to the earth." This seemed like a sword through my heart. In an instant, I recollected having seen my brother standing before me, disputing with the doctor. The three days during which I had appeared lifeless seem to me not more than ten or twenty minutes. The idea of returning to this world of sorrow and trouble gave me such a shock, that I fainted repeatedly.

Such was the effect on my mind of what I had seen and heard, that if it be possible for an human being to live entirely above the world and the things of it, for some time afterwards, I was that person. The ravishing sounds of the songs and hallelujahs that I heard and the very words uttered were not out of my ears, when awake, for at least three years. All the kingdoms of the earth were in my sight as nothing and vanity, and so great were my ideas of heavenly glory that nothing which did not in some measure relate to it could command my serious attention.

This incident, one of the best attested and most impressive on record, however far beyond human definition and explanation, seems to have been one of those times and places when the veil was lifted, and a living testimony furnished of the reality of the invisible world, and of the infinite importance of eternal concerns.

The oldest and most famous of the four sons, Gilbert Tennent, received his education under his father's roof, some time before the Log College was built. In serious concern about the salvation of his soul, and under the impression that his spiritual condition was not good, he could not think of entering the ministry, but determined to take up the study of medicine, which

study he prosecuted for a year. But a better, clearer spiritual day dawning for him, he determined to give himself to the ministry, and was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Philadelphia, in 1726. A year later he became pastor of the Presbyterian Congregation in New Brunswick, New Jersey. From the outset, his preaching was recognized as unusual, and he was popular with all classes of hearers. His voice was clear and commanding; his person unusually tall; his reasoning powers strong and his language "often nervous and indeed sublime."

George Whitefield went to hear Gilbert Tennent preach in New York, and of the preaching he has this to say:

> I went to the meeting-house to hear Mr. Gilbert Tennent preach, and, never before, heard I such a searching sermon. He went to the bottom indeed, and did not daub with untempered mortar. He convinced me, more and more, that we could preach the Gospel of Christ no further than we have experienced the power of it in our own heart. Being deeply convicted of sin, and being from time to time driven from his false bottom and dependencies by God's Holy Spirit at his first conversion, he has learned experimentally to detect the heart of the natural man. Hypocrites must either soon be converted or enraged at his preaching. He is a son of thunder, and does not regard the face of man. He is deeply sensible of the deadness and formality of the Christian Church in these parts, and has given noble testimony against it.

Whitefield's reference to " the deadness and formality of the Christian Church " in the British colonies, at that time, helps us to understand the ministry of

Tennent. By general consent, until the Great Awakening came, the spiritual life of the Church in the Colonies was at a low ebb. Tennent was persuaded by Whitefield to make a preaching tour through New England, as far as Boston, to follow up Whitefield's own work, and water the seed which he had sown in his preaching. He preached for three months in Boston with great power and success. His preaching there is described as being "both terrible and searching." The great revival which came about that time was the subject of a very bitter controversy, and ultimately resulted in dividing the Synod. The friends of the revival looked upon it as a glorious work of God's grace, and

> Hastily took up the opinion that all those ministers who disapproved the work were unconverted men, that they were mere formalists and knew nothing of the vital power of religion, but trusted to a mere profession of orthodoxy. On the other hand, the opposers of the revival blamed the kind of preaching which the revivalists adopted, especially the dwelling so much on the damned. They charged the leaders of the revival with dwelling only on the terrors of the law, with encouraging enthusiastic raptures, and making religion to consist too much in strong emotion and violent excitement, attended often with bodily affections. They were also greatly offended by the harsh, uncharitable spirit with which they were denounced and misrepresented by the preachers on the other side, and their opposition to no one, unless Mr. Whitefield be an exception, was greater than to Mr. Gilbert Tennent.

Tennent was pre-eminent among the friends and promoters of the revival, and also in the harshness of his

censures and the severity of his denunciation of other ministers. An event which had much to do in bringing about the great schism in the Synod was Tennent's famous Nottingham sermon on *The Dangers of an Unconverted Ministry*. This sermon was preached at Nottingham, Pennsylvania, on March 8, 1739, to a congregation looking forward to calling a minister. The text was Mark 6:34—"*And Jesus when he came out saw much people, and was moved with compassion towards them because they were as sheep not having a shepherd.*" The sermon was printed and published by Benjamin Franklin, and had a very wide circulation in the Colonies. The printed edition of the sermon carried on the title page a text from Jeremiah 5:30, 31 —"*A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will they do in the end thereof?*"

These two texts give one a good idea of what follows in the sermon.

In the opening paragraph of the sermon, Tennent sounds a blast on his trumpet which soon reverberated through all the Colonies:

> As a faithful ministry is a great ornament, blessing and comfort to the Church of God; even the feet of such messengers are beautiful; so on the contrary an ungodly ministry is a great curse and judgment: These caterpillars labour to devour every green thing.

The general character of the discourse can be estimated by the following excerpts:

Natural men, not having true love to Christ and the souls of their fellow creatures, hence their discourses are cold and sapless, and as it were, freeze between their lips; and not being sent of God they want that divine authority with which the faithful ambassadors of Christ are clothed.

They comfort people before they convince them; sow before they plow; and are busy in raising a fabric before they lay a foundation. They have not the courage or honesty to thrust the nail of terror into sleeping souls.

Is a blind man fit to be a guide in a very dangerous way? Is a dead man fit to bring others to life? A mad man fit to give counsel in matter of life and death? Is a man possessed fit to cast out devils? A rebel, an enemy to God, fit to be sent on an embassy of peace, to bring rebels into a state of friendship with God? A captive bound in the massy chains of darkness and guilt, a proper person to set others at liberty? A leper, or one that has plague-sores upon him, fit to be a good physician? Is an ignorant rustic, that has never been at sea in his life, fit to be a pilot, to keep vessels from being dashed to pieces upon rocks and sand-banks? Isn't an unconverted minister like a man who would learn others to swim, before he has learned it himself, and so is drowned in the act, and dies like a fool?

Now, what savour have Pharisee ministers? In truth, a very stinking one, both in the nostrils of God and good men. "Be these moral negroes never so white in the mouth (as one expresses it), yet will they hinder instead of helping others, in at the strait gate."

What a scrole and scene of mourning and lamentation and woe is opened because of the swarms of locusts, the crowds of Pharisees, that have as covetously and cruelly, crept into the ministry in this adulterous generation, who as nearly resemble the character given of the old Pharisees

in the doctrinal part of this discourse as one crow's egg does another.

At the very end of the sermon come these words of St. Paul, "*And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works*" (II Corinthians 11:14, 16).

It is needless to say that such a sermon, delivered by a man of Tennent's power, eloquence and influence, created a tremendous stir in the Church, and was one of the chief occasions of the schism which rent the Synod of Philadelphia, in 1741, when the Presbytery of New Brunswick withdrew, afterwards, in 1745, joining with the Presbytery of New York and constituting the new Synod of New York. In answer to the storm of criticism which his sermon occasioned, Tennent said:

> When I composed it, I expected it would be judged by that tribe which it detected as guilty of *scandalum magnatum,* as worthy of stripes and bonds. I supposed it would be like rousing a wasp's nest, and I have found it according to my expectation. The opposers of God's work have dipped their tongues and pens in gall, and by their malignant invectives, have endeavoured to bury its author in ruins. But peradventure, it may have a resurrection to their terror and shame.

At a meeting of the Synod of Philadelphia, and in the presence of "a tumultuous crowd," Gilbert Tennent and Samuel Blair made a formal complaint against their brethren. In the powerful address which

he delivered upon that occasion, Tennent stated his reasons for suspecting that a number of the members of the Synod were in a "carnal state." As the first reason, he cited their unsoundness in some of the principal doctrines of Christianity—that they held there was no difference between the glory of God and the happiness of man, thus rendering regeneration a vain and needless thing. He declared that this doctrine involved a "crimson blasphemy" against the blessed God by putting ourselves on a level with Him. His second reason for doubting the spiritual state of his brethren was certain characteristics of their preaching, that it was powerless and unsavoury, whereas Christ preached with authority; that it was too general, not searching sinners' hearts so narrowly as it ought; that it was soft and flowering, afraid to use the terrors of the Lord to persuade men; that it was legal, crying "Duties, duties," and urging natural men to them almost constantly, as if outward things were the whole of religion; that the preaching was unsuccessful with the appearance of uncontentedness under it.

In the conclusion, Tennent said:

> These things, my brethren, I mention in the fear and love of God without personal prejudice against any. God, who knows my heart, is witness that I heartily desire the convictions of those ministers whom I suspect and that they may be as burning and shining lights in the Church of God. But I am obliged to faithfulness to God and the souls of men to make mention of these things which are distressing to my heart, as some of the reasons why I pro-

test against all restraint in preaching the everlasting Gospel in this degenerate state of the Church.

The feeling between the two groups in the Church, that adhering to the older methods, and that led by William Tennent, Samuel Blair, Jonathan Dickinson and others, became so intense that, at the meeting of the Synod in 1841, Rev. Robert Cross presented and read a protestation. In this protestation, Cross, and those who signed with him, protested against the heterodox and anarchical principles of Tennent and his followers, citing in particular their defiance of the Synod's act in relation to the examination of candidates, their "making irregular eruptions upon the congregations to which they have no immediate relation;" their principles and practise of rash judging and condemning all that do not fall in with their measures, both ministers and people, as carnal men and enemies of the work of God, and what not, as appears in Mr. Gilbert Tennent's sermon against unconverted ministers; their preaching the terrors of the law in such a manner and dialect as has no precedent in the Word of God, but rather appears to be borrowed from the worst dialect, and so industriously working on the passions and affections of weak minds as to cause them to cry out in a hideous manner and to fall down in convulsion like fits, to the marring of the profiting both in themselves and others, who were so taken up in seeing and hearing these odd symptoms that they cannot attend to and hear what the preacher says, and then, after all, boasting of these things as

the work of God, which we are persuaded to proceed from an inferior or worse cause; their preaching and maintaining that all true converts are as certain of their gracious gifts as a person can be of what he knows by his outward senses, and are able to give a narrative of the time and manner of their conversion. In stirring language the protest concludes:

> For these and many other reasons, we protest before the Eternal God, His holy angels, and you reverend brethren and before all here present, that these brethren have no right to be acknowledged as members of this judicatory of Christ, whose principles and practices are so diametrically opposite to our doctrine and principles of government and order which the great King of the Church has laid down in His Word. Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered; but let the righteous be glad, yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.

When it would seem that those favouring the protestation had a majority, Tennent and his followers, amid scenes of great confusion, disorder, and without a moderator in the chair, withdrew from the Synod.

In 1743, Gilbert Tennent became pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia. Hitherto, he had been an extempore preacher; but after his settlement in Philadelphia, he began to write his sermons and to read them from the pulpit. This resulted in a marked diminution of his power and popularity as a preacher. Archibald Alexander once conversed with a man who had attended Tennent's ministry. When asked about his manner of preaching, the man replied, " Mr. Tennent was never worth anything after he

came to Philadelphia, for he took to reading his sermons and lost all his animation." Tennent died in 1764, in the sixty-second year of his age.

In the address which he made before the Synod of Philadelphia, when he stated his reasons for suspecting the carnal state of his brethren, Tennent gave as one characteristic of these preachers, that their preaching was unsuccessful, "*with the appearance of contentedness under it.*" Certainly there could be no stronger evidence of a lack of grace in ministers who, in their preaching, in a spiritual sense, are not only unsuccessful, but "*contented under it.*" What can be more appalling than to see ministers of the everlasting Gospel, which is a savour of life unto life and of death unto death, conducting services in season and out of season, without any results to themselves or to those to whom they preach, and altogether unconcerned with that ill success? "*The Lord knoweth them that are his,*" among the preachers and prophets as among the people; yet every sincere, faithful and soul-seeking minister of Christ will rejoice in, rather than resent, any address or appeal to ministers of Christ, any summary of their duties and qualifications, which may serve to open their understanding to the greatness of their calling and lead them to strive to sanctify themselves before the presence of the Lord.

VIII

SAMUEL DAVIES

POET, PREACHER, AND PATRIOT

ON a Sabbath morning, in the year 1748, the congregation has assembled in the plain, steepleless meeting house where Presbyterians worship at Hanover, Virginia. In the pulpit is a young minister, twenty-four years of age, although, with his Geneva gown, powdered wig and white bands, he looks much older. He has just recovered from a severe illness which threatened his life, and traces of sickness and suffering are plainly visible on his countenance. In one of the pews in front of him sits a widow woman, and by her side a lad of eleven. Instead of gazing at the ceiling, or playing with his hands, or watching the flies as they come in and out at the open windows of the meeting house, this boy seems to be engrossed in the sermon of the preacher, and his black eyes and intelligent face follow the arguments and emotions of the preacher in beautiful sympathy. After the boy and his mother have driven home in their gig, the mother asks her son for the text. He not only gives it, but is able to furnish an outline of the sermon.

Seven years pass. It is a July Sabbath in 1755.

Terrible tidings have come across the mountains of the disaster which has befallen the British and Colonial army under General Braddock, in the wilderness on the banks of the Monongahela River. The same congregation which gathered in 1748 has assembled to hear the same preacher. But the erstwhile unknown licentiate of seven years ago has now become the most eloquent and popular preacher in the American Colonies.

The preacher takes for his text Isaiah 22:12—"*And in that day did the Lord God of hosts call to weeping and to mourning.*" Feeling the meaning of the crisis which confronted Virginia and the other Colonies to the depths of his soul, the preacher cries with all the eloquence for which he is now famous:

> Oh, Virginia, oh, my country, shall I not lament for thee? Thou art a valley of vision, favoured with the light of revelation from heaven and the Gospel of Jesus. Thou hast long been the region of peace and tranquillity, the land of ease, plenty and liberty. But what do I now see? What do I now hear? I see thy brazen skies, thy parched soil, thy withering fields, thy hopeless springs, thy scanty harvest. Methinks I hear, also, the sound of the trumpet, and see thy garments rolled in blood; thy frontiers ravaged by revengeful savages; thy territories invaded by French perfidy and violence. Methinks I see slaughtered families, the scalps clotted with gore, the horrid arts of Indian and Popish torture. And alas! in the midst of all these alarms I see thine inhabitants generally asleep and careless of thy fate.
>
> What is that religion good for that leaves men cowards upon the appearance of danger? That is a mean, sordid,

cowardly soul that would abandon his country when there is any probability of defending it. Certainly he does not deserve a place in any country who is ready to run from it upon every appearance of danger. Let us, then, my brethren, show ourselves men, Britons, and Christians on this trying occasion. What! shall we tamely resign so extensive and flourishing a country—a land of plenty and liberty—to a parcel of perfidious French and savage Indians? Shall slavery here clank her chain or tyranny rage with lawless fury? Shall the house of God be turned into a temple of idols? No, sirs! Let us make a noble stand for the blessings we enjoy!

And Virginians! Britons! Christians! Protestants! If these names have any import or energy, will you not strike home in such a cause? Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood!

The widow's boy, who listened raptly to this same preacher seven years before, is now a young man of eighteen. Once again his cheek colours and his eye glows as he sits listening to the torrent of the preacher's oratory. Twenty years afterwards this same young man is to arise on a May day in 1775, in St. John's Church in Richmond, and lift himself into immortality with the concluding paragraph of his speech: "It is vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentleman may cry, 'Peace,' 'Peace,' but there is no peace. The war is actually begun. The next gale that sweeps from the North will bring to our ears the clash of arms. Our brethren already are in the fields. Why stand we here idle? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God, I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty

or give me death!" Patrick Henry had lighted his torch at Samuel Davies' flame.

Samuel Davies was born in New Castle County, Delaware, November 3, 1723. His parents were of Welsh descent, and it is fairly well established that Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy, was the descendant of the same Welsh family from which Samuel Davies came. In the ardour of his preaching Davies was a true representative of that fervent Celtic eloquence for which the Welsh pulpit has always been distinguished. He was an only son, and the name his mother gave him, Samuel, was at once a token of her faith and her dedication of her son to the service of the Lord. He was educated in the famous school conducted by the Rev. Samuel Blair at Faggs Manor, Chester County, Pennsylvania, and in the twenty-third year of his age, 1746, was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of New Castle.

After some experience as an itinerant evangelist in Virginia, he was settled, in the year 1748, as pastor of the church at Hanover, Virginia, about twelve miles from Richmond. The Presbytery of Hanover then comprehended the whole of Virginia, and a considerable part of North Carolina. He had as many as seven preaching stations, all widely scattered through that part of the State. He quickly established for himself a reputation as a preacher of power and genius. His church, which accommodated about five hundred persons, was frequently crowded out, and he would preach to the listening throngs in a neighbouring grove. He divided his time among the seven

preaching stations, and this gave him the opportunity to prepare for the pulpit with unusual care. He is on record as saying, that he considered nothing a sermon unless it was the product of at least four days' hard labour. When a minister, today, faces the task of preaching, not one or two sermons in a month, but two every week, with a lecture or address on Wednesday night, and then remembers that there are only seven days in the week, he will sometimes long for the homiletic schedule of Samuel Davies.

On a Saturday evening in 1743, the Rev. William Robinson, who had been sent by the Presbytery of New Brunswick, New Jersey, to preach to the dissenters of Virginia, stopped at a tavern about ten miles from Hanover, where he was to preach on the following Sabbath. The tavern-keeper was a coarse, profane man, and as he was in the midst of uttering his oaths, Robinson ventured to rebuke him for his profanity, whereupon the innkeeper laughed at him and said, "Who are you to take such authority upon yourself?" "I am a minister of the Gospel," said Robinson. "Then you belie your looks very much!" was the reply. Robinson had suffered from the ravages of smallpox, which had deprived him of the sight of one of his eyes, and left his face terribly marked. He told the innkeeper that he was to preach at Hanover on the morrow, and asked him to accompany him and hear the sermon. "I will," said the innkeeper, "if you'll preach from a text that I will give you." Robinson said he would do so, if there was nothing unsuitable in the text. Whereupon, the tavern-

keeper assigned him this text from Psalm 139:14—"*For I am fearfully and wonderfully made.*" Robinson carried out his part of the bargain, and preached such a powerful sermon that the tavern-keeper was made to see that he was the monster, and that he it was who was "fearfully and wonderfully made." Converted by the sermon, he became a pious and worthy member of the Church.

When Robinson was leaving his friends in Virginia to pursue his way north, some of those to whom he had preached sent a messenger after him, to give him a sum of gold as a compensation. This he peremptorily refused to accept, except upon one condition. This was that he should use the money to help a promising young man of indigent circumstances, who was then prosecuting his studies for the ministry in Pennsylvania. The "promising young man" was none other than Samuel Davies. Now, as if by way of reward for their generosity to the travelling evangelist, the young man of promise came into their midst to minister to them.

Davies and Tennent were eminently successful in their embassy, and the future prosperity of the College of New Jersey was, in a way, founded upon the influence of Tennent and Davies in Great Britain. It was during this winter, also, that Davies established his reputation as a preacher in Great Britain. In nearly every biographical sketch of Davies which has come down to us, reference is made to a sermon he preached before King George II. In the midst of the sermon the king was observed to speak several times

to those who were sitting near him. Shocked at such irreverence in the house of God, Davies paused and looked severely in the direction of the king. When the same offensive conduct was again observed, Davies exclaimed, "When the lion roars, the beasts of the forest all tremble, and when King Jesus speaks, the princes of the earth should keep silent." The king gave a courteous bow to the preacher and sat in quiet and reverence during the rest of the service. The explanation given of the king's conduct was that he was so taken with the eloquence of Davies that he was constrained to give expression to his emotion and his delight to those who sat about him. As no reference to this incident occurs in the diary kept by Davies, it has been regarded by most biographers as apocryphal. But whether apocryphal or not, it is a clear intimation of the sway, power and reputation of Davies as a preacher.

On September 26, 1759, Samuel Davies was inaugurated as President of the College of New Jersey, succeeding in that office Jonathan Edwards. During his all too brief career as President, he more than sustained the great reputation which had preceded him. He took a particular interest in composition and public speaking. He directed the members of the senior class to compose "a Popular Harangue," to be delivered publicly in the college hall before the masters and students, and "as many of the inhabitants of town as choose to attend." Six of these orations were delivered on the first Wednesday in every month to crowded audiences, for not a few of the "inhabitants

of the town chose to attend," and, to quote the words of a contemporary chronicler, "It is hard to say whether the entertainment of the hearers or the improvement of the students was the greater."

On New Year's Day, 1761, Davies preached a sermon on Jeremiah 28:16, "*Thus saith the Lord, this year thou shalt die.*" Some few days before, a friend had remarked to him that President Aaron Burr, on the first day of the year in which he died, had preached on that text. As in the case of Aaron Burr, it was for Davies a prophetic text, and he preached, as it were, his own funeral sermon, for he died on February 4, 1761, in the thirty-eighth year of his age. His untimely death caused great lamentation at Princeton, in the American Colonies, and in Great Britain. In a memorial sermon, preached at Haberdasher's Hall, in London, Dr. Thomas Gibbons said of Davies, "He is dead, he is departed—America in groans proclaims her inexpressible loss, and we, in Great Britain, share the distress and echo groan for groan."

Dr. Gibbons, of London, editor of his sermons, and one of Davies' intimate friends, thus describes his preaching:

> With what majesty and grandeur would he illustrate the truths, and inculcate the duties of Christianity! Mount Sinai seemed to thunder from his lips, when he denounced the tremendous curses of the Law, and sounded the dreadful alarm to guilty, secure, impenitent sinners. And how the Balm of Gilead was distilled from his lips, when he exhibited a bleeding, dying Saviour to sinful mortals, as a sovereign remedy for the wounded heart, and anguished conscience!

In the preaching of Samuel Davies we have an exhibition of the fortunate combination of logical and imaginative powers. His carefully prepared discourses spring as naturally and easily out of his text as the tree from the root in the earth, and, like the tree, his sermons are full of grace and beauty. Sometimes, we have had preachers notable for their logic and clearness of utterance, and, sometimes, preachers, such as Christmas Evans, in whom imagination waves an enchanted wand. But in Samuel Davies, there is a remarkable combination of these gifts. Davies preached in a day when preachers were supposed to appeal to the souls of their hearers, and to dwell upon the great themes of repentance, judgment and forgiveness. Always in feeble health, and "finding himself on the borders of the grave and without any hopes of a recovery, he determined to spend the little remains of an almost exhausted life in endeavouring to advance his Master's story in the good of souls." Through all his sermons there runs the deep vibration of his earnest appeal to his hearers to repent and be saved.

Davies was no mean poet, and two odes by him, one on Science and the other on Peace, were sung at the morning and evening exercises of the Commencement of 1762. In his poem, *A Minister's Reflections on the Death of One of His People,* we catch the keynote of the preaching of this son of thunder:

I, too, ere long must yield my breath;
My mouth, for ever clos'd in death,
Shall sound the Gospel-trump no more:

Then, while my charge is in my reach,
With fervour let me pray and preach,
And eager catch the flying hour!

Almighty Grace, my soul inspire,
And touch my lips with heav'nly fire!
Let faith, and love, and zeal arise!
O teach me that divinest art,
To reach the conscience, gain the heart,
And train immortals for the skies!

Few American preachers have had such a wide reading as Davies. Before the end of the eighteenth century, nine editions of his sermons had been published. This was the more remarkable, when we remember that his sermons are almost wholly posthumous in their publication.

One of the chief characteristics of the preaching of Davies was the sweep and power of his introduction. Sometimes he follows the safer homiletic principle of a mild beginning, accompanied by illuminating comment on the context of the passage. But quite often he went into action with all flags flying, and every gun contributing its thunder in one grand broadside. For example of this, let me quote the following passages:

From *A New Year Sermon:*

Time, like an ever-running stream, is perpetually gliding on, and hurrying us, and all the sons of men, into the boundless ocean of eternity.

From a sermon on *Immortality:*

Some make a sort of journey from the womb to the

grave; they rise from nothing, at the creative fiat of the Almighty, and take an immediate flight into the world of spirits, without an intermediate state of probation. Like a bird on the wing, they perch on our globe, rest a day, a month, or a year, and then fly off for some other regions.

Others spring up and bloom for a few years; but they fade away like a flower, and are cut down. Others arrive at the prime of meridian of human life; but in all their strength and gaiety, and amid their hurries and schemes, and promising prospects, they are surprised by the arrest of death, and laid stiff, senseless and ghastly in the grave. A few creep into their beds of dust under the burden of old age and the gradual decays of nature. In short, the grave is *the place appointed for all living;* the general rendezvous of all the sons of Adam.

From a sermon on *The Shortness and Vanity of Life:*

A creature treading every moment upon the slippery brink of the grave, and ready every moment to shoot the gulf of eternity, and launch away to some unknown coast, ought to stand always in the posture of serious expectation.

From a sermon on *The Preciousness of Christ:*

Yes: blessed be God; though a great part of the creation is disaffected to Jesus Christ; though fallen spirits, both in flesh and without flesh, both upon earth and in hell, neglect Him or profess themselves open enemies to Him, yet He is precious; precious not only in Himself, not only to His Father, not only to the choirs of Heaven, who behold His full glory without a veil, but precious to some even in our guilty world; precious to a sort of persons of our sinful race, who make no great figure in mortal eyes, who have no idea of their own goodness; who are mean, unworthy creatures, in their own view, and who are generally despicable in the view of others; I mean He is precious to all true believers.

From the foregoing passages it will be seen that death with its solemn implications, as the end of probation and judgment to come, was a favourite theme of this great preacher. Whether the preacher be the Lord Jesus, Himself, or St. Peter, or St. Paul, or Chrysostom, or a Calvin, a Bunyan, a Whitefield, or a Davies, his grandest and most moving passages are those which dwell upon the termination of man's life, and all it implies. Nor is it otherwise when we turn to the masterpieces of literature, whether of poetry or prose. This is only what we might expect, for death, although it has reigned for so long a time, has permitted no familiarity to breed contempt for its power and authority. Yet, for some strange reason, modern preaching has almost completely abandoned one of the great facts of human existence and divine probation. The drama has not abandoned it; fiction has not abandoned it; poetry has not abandoned it; the moving-picture screen has not abandoned it—Why should the pulpit? Why should we preach to men as if they were to live forever, and hide from them the sentence which hangs over all human life?

When Davies returned from Great Britain, in 1755, after his successful embassy on behalf of the College of New Jersey, he found Virginia in convulsions over the inroads of the French and Indians. Into that struggle he threw himself with wonderful ardour and patriotic zeal, and some of the most stirring of his sermons were preached during this period. Our school-book reading of the history of that war gives but a faint impression of the consternation, alarm and dread with

which the American Colonists contemplated that critical struggle for the mastery of the American continent. What deep feelings it evoked, what principles of democracy and religious liberty were thought to be in jeopardy—all this the student of American history will learn from the sermons of Samuel Davies, as he can learn it from no other source. Never has the Christian pulpit rung with more eloquent and moving appeals to men to adventure their all in behalf of country and of liberty, civil and religious. Yet no preacher was more loyal to the great task committed to all preachers, that of proclaiming the Gospel and offering to men the mediation of Jesus: and in the midst of his most fervent, patriotic addresses, Davies always is an ambassador of Christ. He saw no inconsistency in calling upon men to repent of their sins, and at the same time calling them to go forth into battle for a righteous cause.

It was in a footnote of one of these patriotic sermons preached after the defeat of Braddock, that Davies wrote his prophetic forecast of the career of George Washington:

> As a remarkable instance of this, I may point out to the public, that heroic youth, Col. Washington, whom I cannot but hope Providence has hitherto preserved in so signal a manner, for some important service to his country.

One of the most notable of the political sermons of Davies was the sermon preached in Nassau Hall, January 14, 1761, on the death of King George II.

His text was II Samuel 1:19—"*How are the mighty fallen.*" The sermon commences:

George is no more! George, the mighty, the just, the gentle, and the wise; George, the father of Britain and her Colonies, the guardian of laws and liberty, the protector of the oppressed, the arbiter of Europe, the terror of tyrants and France; George, the friend of man, the benefactor of millions, is no more!—millions tremble at the alarm. Britain expresses her sorrow in national groans. Europe re-echoes to the melancholy sound. The melancholy sound circulates far and wide. This remote American continent shares in the loyal sympathy. The wide intermediate Atlantic rolls the tide of grief to these distant shores; and even the recluse sons of Nassau Hall feel the immense bereavement, with all the sensibility of a filial heart; and must mourn with their country, with Britain, with Europe, with the world—George was our father, too.

After a high-sounding eulogy of George II. as the greatest of kings, and predictions, unhappily not fulfilled, about the character and reign of George III., the sermon concludes with an appeal to the student for loyalty and devotion to the Crown:

Therefore act up to your principles, practise according to your political creed, and then my most benevolent wishes, nay, the highest wishes of your king and fellow-subjects, will be amply accomplished in you. Then you will give the world an honourable and just specimen of the morals and politics inculcated in the College of New Jersey; and convince them that it is a seminary of loyalty, as well as learning and piety; a nursery for the State, as well as the Church. Such may it always continue! You all concur in your cordial Amen.

In spite of all the histories which have been written, there is a real difficulty in getting at the secret and source of the great change which suddenly came over the American Colonies in their relationship to Great Britain. How great, sudden, and complete that change was, one will realize if he read the sermon, preached in Nassau Hall, in January, 1761, by President Davies on the death of King George II., and contrast that utterance with the fervent declaration of Davies' next successor, but one, in the Presidency of Princeton, John Witherspoon, when he affixed his signature to the Declaration of Independence.

On a January day, 1761, the students and inhabitants of Princeton are met together, none dissenting, in Nassau Hall, to listen to their eloquent President extol the virtues of George II., and pledge loyalty to George III., the British Constitution and the Protestant Succession. On October 31, 1783, the Continental Congress, sitting in the same Nassau Hall, then the largest edifice in the Colonies, which, only a few years before, had rung with the accents of Samuel Davies' eulogy upon George II., received the news of the signing of the treaty of peace with Great Britain, and the establishment of independence.

As in the case of Chalmers, a severe and prolonged illness lifted Davies into the unseen and brought him into the closest fellowship with Christ as a Mediator for sinners: "His soul burned with the desire of usefulness, and his tongue uttered the earnest persuasion of a spirit that would reconcile men to God and lay some trophies at the Re-

deemer's feet before his lips should be locked in the grave."

To his friend, Dr. Thomas Gibbons, in London, Davies wrote:

I am just beginning to creep back from the valley of the shadow of death, to which I made a vain near approach a few days ago. I was seized with a most violent fever which came to a crisis in a week. Blessed be my Master's name, this disorder found me employed in His service. It seized me in the pulpit—like a soldier wounded in the field. In my sickness I found the unspeakable importance of a mediator in a religion for sinners. Oh, I could have given you the word of a dying man for it, that Jesus whom you preach is indeed a necessary and all-sufficient Saviour. None but Christ, none but Christ!

Perhaps, once in three or four months, I preach in some measure as I could wish. That is, I preach as in the sight of God, and if I were to step from the pulpit to the Supreme Tribunal, I feel my subject, I melt into tears, or I shudder with horror when I denounce the terrors of the Lord. I glow, I soar in sacred ecstasy. The love of Jesus is my stay, and as Mr. Baxter was wont to express it:

I preached as never sure to preach again;
As a dying man to dying men.

But, alas, my spirit soon flags; my devotion languishes and my zeal cools.

In all his sermons, Davies preached as an ambassador for Christ, and pleaded earnestly and tenderly with the unsaved. The tender, earnest note is beautifully reverberant in a farewell sermon, preached to the Congregation at Hanover, when he was leaving for Princeton:

Shall I say, farewell, impenitent sinners? Alas! you cannot *fare well,* however heartily I wish it. Your consciences bear witness, "that you have had precept upon precept, and line upon line," during my ministry among you—that "I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God, and have kept back nothing that was likely to be profitable to you.

My voice, it is probable, will never more be heard by you. This will be the last time. O recollect the many invitations I have given you on the one hand, and threatenings on the other. Heaven forbid that any of them should arise in judgment against you another day! Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation. Today, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. "I beseech you, once more, and I may say, once for all, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Do not cause me to appear, as a swift witness against you another day—the day of universal retribution. Flee, flee, all of you, from the wrath to come—lay hold on the hope that is set before you! I have finished my message among you. Oh, forget it not! Lay it seriously to heart. Farewell—"finally, brethren, farewell; be of one mind, live in peace."

The last Great Assize has ever been a theme which has stirred the eloquence of the sons of thunder. But never did that solemn and tremendous theme receive a more powerful treatment than at the hands of Samuel Davies. Perhaps the greatest passage in all his sermons is that passage in *The General Resurrection,* where he gives a dramatic interview and dialogue between the body and the soul as they meet in the Great Day, the spirit vainly protesting against reunion with the body, in and through which it had sinned; the body, in bitter recrimination, heaping reproach upon

the soul, because, by the soul, it had been prostituted to base uses. Picture a congregation, where no one disbelieved in the resurrection of the body, and the Last Judgment, and a preacher in the pulpit of Davies' power, eloquence and earnestness, and we may have some conception of the effect which must have been produced by the pronouncement of the following passage:

And must I be chained to thee again (may the guilty soul say), O thou accursed, polluted body, thou system of deformity and terror! In thee I once sinned, by thee I was once ensnared, debased, and ruined: to gratify thy vile lusts and appetites I neglected my own immortal interests, degraded my native dignity, and made myself miserable for ever. And hast thou now met me to torment me for ever? O that thou hadst still slept in the dust, and never been repaired again! Let me rather be condemned to animate a toad, or serpent, than that odious body once defiled with sin, and the instrument of my guilty pleasures, now made strong and immortal to torment me with strong and immortal pains. Once indeed I received sensations of pleasure from thee, but now, thou are transformed into an engine of torture.

No more shall I through thine eyes behold the cheerful light of the day. No more shall thine ears charm me with the harmony of sounds, but terrify and distress me with the echo of eternal groans, and the thunder of almighty vengeance! No more shall thy tongue be employed in mirth, and jest, and song, but complain, and groan, and blaspheme, and roar for ever. Thy feet, that once walked in the flowery, enchanted paths of sin, must now walk on the dismal burning soil of hell. O my wretched companion! I parted with thee with pain and reluctance in the struggles of death, but now I meet thee with greater terror

and agony. Return to thy bed in the dust; there to sleep and rot, and let me never see thy shocking visage more.

In vain the petition! The reluctant soul must enter its prison, from whence it shall never more be dismissed. And if we might indulge imagination so far, we might suppose the body begins to recriminate in such language as this: "Come, guilty soul, enter thy old mansion; if it be horrible and shocking, it is owing to thyself. Was not the animal frame, the brutal nature, subjected to thy government, who art a rational principle? Instead of being debased by me, it became thee to have not only retained the dignity of thy nature, but to have exalted mine. Thou mightest have restrained my members from being the instruments of sin, and made them the instruments of righteousness.

My knees would have bowed at the throne of grace, but thou didst not affect that posture. Mine eyes would have read, and mine ears heard the word of life; but thou wouldest not set them to that employ. And now it is but just the body thou didst prostitute to sin should be the instrument of thy punishment. Indeed, fain would I relapse into senseless earth as I was, and continue in that insensibility for ever:—but didst thou not hear the all-rousing trumpet just now? Did it not even shake the foundations of thy infernal prison? It was that call that awakened me, and summoned me to meet thee, and I could not resist it. Therefore, come, miserable soul, take possession of this frame, and let us prepare for everlasting burning. Oh, that it were now possible to die! Oh that we could be again separated, and never be united more! Vain wish; the weight of mountains, the pangs of hell, the flames of unquenchable fire, can never dissolve these chains which now bind us together!

IX

ELIPHALET NOTT

GREAT PREACHERS AND DUELLING

THE sound of oars breaks the stillness of a summer morning along the banks of the Hudson. Presently, a barge appears out of the mists which hang over the river, and several men step ashore and commence to climb the steep hill of Weehawken. Soon after they have reached a level place near the top of the palisade, they are joined by a second group who have followed them across the river.

Two men come forward to a place between the two groups and, after exchanging salutations, a coin is tossed into the air; first, for choice of position, then for the right to give the word "Present!" Both tosses are won by the same man, who chooses for his principal a position with the sun at his back. Then a distance of ten paces is stepped off, and two pistols are brought out and carefully loaded and primed in the presence of both seconds.

After a few moments' conversation in each group, the two principals step forward and take their stations, ten paces apart. One of these, addressed as "General," is forty-seven years old, slight in build,

short in stature, dignified in carriage. His eyes are deep set in a fine head; his face is rather sharp and angular, the most marked trait of it being his long nose and the distance between the nose and the point of the chin. His face betrays no eagerness for his present engagement, but rather a sad reluctance, for on the same spot his son Philip had fallen in a duel, not long before. The other principal, addressed as "Colonel," is forty-eight years of age, very short of stature, with a head which immediately suggests mental capacity, and a finely-cut face, which plainly shows a grim eagerness for what he is about to do. Both are famous men in their state and nation, the Colonel being Vice-President of the United States, the General celebrated as a political philosopher and financier.

The second who is to give the word inquires of the two men if they are ready. The Colonel says he is ready; but the General, when he is asked, says, "I beg your pardon for delaying you; but the direction of the light sometimes renders glasses necessary." He then drew forth his spectacles and, putting them on, levelled his pistol in several directions to try the light. Both now being ready, the second, with a loud voice, cries, "Present!" Both men raise their pistols and fire. The General rises slightly on his toes, and turning a little to the left, falls on his face, exclaiming, as he does so, "I am a dead man." The Colonel then steps forward towards his fallen antagonist with a manner and a look that seem to be expressive of regret; but, without speaking,

turns away and hurries from the field, covered with an umbrella.

With the flash of those pistols on the "tragic shores of Weehawken," that July morning in 1804, Alexander Hamilton achieved the rôle of one of the nation's martyrs, and Aaron Burr became, after Benedict Arnold, America's most notorious villain.

Alexander Hamilton was born at Nevis, in the West Indies, in 1757. He was student at King's College (now Columbia University) when the Revolutionary War broke out. Casting in his fortune with the Colonists, he had a distinguished military career, serving for four years on Washington's staff. He played a conspicuous part in the adoption of the Federal Constitution, and became Secretary of the Treasury in Washington's Cabinet. His ability as a master of finance is set forth by the famous metaphor of Daniel Webster's speech: "He smote the rock of national resources, and abundant streams of revenue gushed forth. He touched the dead corpse of public credit, and it sprang upon its feet."

In Princeton there are two graves, well known to generations of students. One is the grave of Catherine Bullock, in the very midst of the Princeton campus surrounded by grey stone dormitories, and passed by thousands of visitors as they hurry on their way to the games in the stadium. The other is in the Princeton Cemetery, and is marked by a much-chipped stone on which is this inscription:

Aaron Burr,
Born February the 6th, 1756
Died September 14th, 1836
A Colonel in the Army of the Revolution
Vice-President of the United States
from 1801-1805.

The grave in Princeton Cemetery gives the chronological facts of Aaron Burr's life: the grave of Catherine Bullock, on the Princeton campus, an index to his character. Associated with an untrustworthy story that the girl died of a broken heart, because of her betrayal by Burr, as a result of a student wager, after he had seen her pretty face at a Princeton window, the second grave is a monument to the licentiousness of the man whose last spoken word, when he died at Staten Island, in 1836, was, " Madame."

Burr sleeps hard by the Presidents of Princeton, for his father, the Reverend Aaron Burr, was the second President of Princeton, and his grandfather, Jonathan Edwards, the third President. Nature and heredity did much for Burr, for, on both sides of his family, he was the son, grandson and great-grandson of ministers of the Gospel. His father was an able minister and President, his grandfather, Jonathan Edwards, possibly the greatest thinker America has yet produced. His mother, Esther Edwards, was beautiful, talented, quick-witted, of marked literary gift, and devoutly religious. Burr was a child of many prayers, " a child of the Covenant," as the Calvinists were wont to say. His mother, writing to Jonathan Edwards just after the death of Aaron's father, said: " In

this time of trial I was enabled to enter into a renewed and explicit covenant with God. After much self-examination and prayer, I did give myself and children to God with my whole heart. Never, until now, had I a sense of the privilege we are allowed in covenanting with God."

Aaron Burr's father died when he was little more than a year old; his grandfather, Jonathan Edwards, six weeks after; sixteen days later, his beautiful and gifted mother died of the smallpox; six months after, his grandmother, Sarah Edwards. Brought up by relatives, Burr was educated at Princeton, where he graduated in 1772. Whether trustworthy or not, anecdotes of his infidelity and licentiousness are still current at Princeton. Some of the essays he composed when a student, however, are entirely out of keeping with such a tradition, especially one written on the subject of duelling. In the conclusion of this essay, he tells how Colonel Gardiner, when called out to fight a duel, replied, " with all the boldness and intrepidity of a warrior and all the godlike reverence of the Christian, ' You know that I have courage to fight with feeble man; but I am afraid to sin against Almighty God.' Thus spake, at once, the Christian hero and the true warlike man." But that was the opinion of the boy of sixteen, a senior at Nassau Hall.

In 1804, Burr, then Vice-President of the United States, was nominated for the Governorship of New York. His opponent was Chief Justice Lewis, candidate of the then Republican party. After a campaign of almost unbelievable scurrility and vituperation,

Lewis was elected. Stung by the attacks made on his character during the campaign, Burr had vowed to "call out" the first man of respectability concerned in the infamous publications, and when there came to his hands copies of the *Albany Register,* containing letters in which Hamilton was quoted as saying that Burr was "a dangerous man and ought not to be trusted," with a reference to "a still more despicable opinion," Burr wrote to Hamilton, demanding a "prompt and unqualified acknowledgment or denial." Hamilton would neither avow nor disavow the offensive statement, but quibbled as to the meaning of phrases which had come to the notice of Burr. After several exchanges, Burr sent the challenge on June 27. By mutual consent, the duel was postponed until after the close of the Circuit Court, where Hamilton was trying cases. During this period, the two men went quietly about their business, and, on one occasion, sat next to one another at a dinner of the Society of the Cincinnati. While he was preparing for the duel with Hamilton, Burr fought a duel with swords with a Samuel Bradhurst, who had tried to act as a peacemaker.

The storm of indignation and horror which broke when news came of the fall of Hamilton, seemed to wash away every fault of the dead, while it exposed and brought to the surface, every vice of Burr. The duel had been conducted strictly in accordance with the code of the times. Scores of men had killed or mutilated other men in a duel, and with no particular obloquy attaching to them. A quarter of a century later, the fact that Andrew Jackson had killed a man

in a duel, did not prevent his election as President of the United States. But when Hamilton fell, Burr was execrated as a conspirator and assassin. The publication of Hamilton's paper, written before the duel, in which he states his reluctance to fight, and his intention to reserve his first fire, undoubtedly had much to do with the popular indignation. But the testimony of the seconds about Hamilton putting on his glasses, and carefully trying the light, would not seem to be in keeping with his announced purpose not to fire. The seconds agreed in their statement that both pistols were discharged, Burr's second declaring that Hamilton fired first, a statement corroborated by Burr himself. But Hamilton's second declared that the discharge of Hamilton's pistol was purely accidental. After the duel, Burr was indicted for murder, both in New York and New Jersey, and for a time went into retirement in the South. After the expiration of his term as Vice-President, in 1805, and virtually an exile and outcast, he visited the Southwest and became involved in a supposed conspiracy against the United States. Probably his real purpose was to start a revolt against Spanish power in the Southwest and form a dynasty in Mexico. Brought to trial at Richmond, in 1807, on the charge of treason, Burr was acquitted.

The noblest thing in Burr's life was his love for his beautiful daughter, Theodosia, who married Governor Alston, of South Carolina. This daughter sailed on a packet from Charleston, South Carolina, to visit her father at New York. The ship was never heard of again. Burr, then an old man, would frequently be

seen standing on the Battery and gazing down the harbour, looking in vain for the ship which never came.

Today, duelling is not only outlawed, but obsolete, and the man who, for a fancied or a real offense to his honour, challenged another to fight a duel, and the man who accepted the challenge, would be looked upon as fool or criminal. But in the early part of the nineteenth century, and for a long time afterwards, the duel was worshipped as an idol by thousands of Americans, and on the bloody field of honour thousands of lives were sacrificed which might have rendered noble service to their country. The duel deprived America of the services of a great intellect and a great financier, Alexander Hamilton. It almost deprived the country of the services of Andrew Jackson, one of its greatest Presidents; and but for a fortunate intervention, the life of Abraham Lincoln might have gone out, unheard of, on that September morning, when he went down to fight a duel with James Shields on a sand-bar in the Mississippi. How strong a hold duelling, although already outlawed, had upon the customs of the day, may be inferred from the paper which Alexander Hamilton composed, just before he went across the Hudson to fight the duel with Burr:

> To those who, with me, abhorring the practise of duelling, may think that I ought on no account to have added to the number of bad examples, I answer that, my *relative* situation, as well in public as private, enforcing all the considerations which constitute what men of the world denominate honour, imposed on me (as I thought) a peculiar

necessity not to decline the call. The ability to be in future useful, whether in resisting mischief or effecting good, in those crises of our public affairs, which seem likely to happen, would probably be inseparable from a conformity with public prejudice in this particular.

The death of Hamilton, at the hands of Burr, evoked two of the greatest utterances on social questions in the history of the American pulpit. One of these utterances was the memorial sermon preached by Eliphalet Nott, in First Presbyterian Church, Albany, New York. The preacher was born at Ashford, Connecticut, in 1773, and died at Schenectady, New York, in 1866. He was educated at Brown University, and, in 1804, became President of Union College, Schenectady. In addition to his achievements as a preacher and an educator, Nott was the inventor of the first stove for burning anthracite coal. The other great utterance was a sermon preached by Lyman Beecher, considerably later, before the Presbytery of Long Island, at Aquebogue. Both sermons are magnificent and prophet-like deliverances, and both had a wide circulation, and reached the national conscience.

The sermon by Nott was based on a text from II Samuel 1:19—"*How are the mighty fallen.*" This sermon is notable, not only as a prophet's cry against duelling, but as a eulogy of the character of Alexander Hamilton, concerning which the preacher said.

Oh, that I possessed the talent of eulogy, and that I might be permitted to indulge the tenderness of friendship, in paying the last tribute to his memory! O that I were capable of placing this great man before you! But I can-

not do this; I can only hint at the variety and exuberance of his excellence, as:

The man, on whom nature seems originally to have impressed the stamp of greatness;

The hero, who calls from his sequestered retreat, and whose first appearance in the field, though a stripling, conciliated the esteem of Washington, our good old father;

The conquerer, who, sparing of human blood, when victory favoured, stayed the uplifted arm, and nobly said to the vanquished enemy, "Live;"

The statesman, the correctness of whose principles and the strength of whose mind, are inscribed on the records of Congress;

The counsellor, who was at once the pride of the bar and the admiration of the Court; whose apprehensions were quick as lightning, and whose development of truth was luminous as its path.

The patriot, whose integrity baffled the scrutiny of inquisition; who, always great, always himself, stood amidst the varying tides of party, firm, like the rock, which, far from land, lifts its majestic top above the waves, and remains unshaken by the storms which agitate the ocean.

The friend, who knew no guile, whose bosom was transparent and deep; in the bottom of whose heart was rooted every tender and sympathetic virtue.

If this eulogy seems extravagant and fulsome, it must be remembered that it was only in keeping with the extraordinary chorus of praise and adulation which Hamilton's death in the duel with Burr evoked. The statement in Hamilton's paper, written just before the duel, that he would reserve his fire, the rumour that Burr had been practising for weeks, and that, on the day of the duel, he wore a silk shirt to deflect the bullet, all combined to exalt Hamilton to the rôle of

a martyr. Yet those who eulogized Hamilton, and the general public, too, for that matter, knew very well that he was no paragon of virtue. But everyone seemed wishful to disregard what was unsavoury in the life of Hamilton. During his term as Secretary of the Treasury, he had drifted into the miserable intrigue with Mrs. Reynolds, in Philadelphia. When political enemies got hold of this dark episode, and were using it to support charges of dishonesty against him while in office, Hamilton, rather than have a shadow cast upon his political integrity, published a full and frank account of his relationship with this woman.

Gouverneur Morris, who delivered Hamilton's funeral panegyric in Trinity Church, records in his diary the difficulties confronting him in the preparation of the eulogy. Among the points which he says he must avoid are, first of all, the fact of Hamilton's illegitimate birth, his attachment to monarchial government, that he could not thoroughly excuse himself, as to the duel, without criminating Colonel Burr, who "ought to be considered in the same light with any other man who had killed another in a duel." Then he adds, "I must not either dwell on his domestic life; he had long since foolishly published the avowal of conjugal infidelity."

One of the finest things in this great sermon is the preacher's appeal, at the beginning, to the angels and celestial spirits to withdraw from the church, while he argues with Christians about the crime of duelling:

Withdraw, therefore, for a moment, ye celestial spirits—ye holy angels accustomed to hover round these altars, and listen to those strains of grace, which, heretofore, have filled this house of God. Other subjects occupy us. Withdraw, therefore, and leave us; leave us to exhort Christian parents to restrain their vengeance, and at least to keep back their hands from blood; to exhort youth, nurtured in Christian families, not rashly to sport with life, nor lightly to wring the widow's heart with sorrow, and fill the orphan's eye with tears.

It took no little courage for a preacher, under those circumstances, to point out, not only the sin of duelling, but the sin of the man who had lost his life in the duel:

Ah, said the preacher, had he fallen in the course of nature; or jeopardized his life in the defense of his country; had he fallen—but he did not. He fell in single combat—pardon my mistake!—he did *not* fall in single combat. His noble nature refused to endanger the life of his antagonist. But he exposed his own life. This was his crime: and the sacredness of my office forbids that I should hesitate explicitly to declare it so.

Smashing at the chief defense of the cruel custom, a false sense of honour, the preacher said:

Who is it, then, that calls the duellist to the dangerous and deadly combat? Is it God? No; on the contrary, He forbids it. Is it, then, his country? No; she also utters her prohibitory voice. Who is it, then? A man of honour. And who is this man of honour? A man, perhaps, whose honour is a name; who prates, with polluted lips, about the sacredness of character, when his own is stained with crimes,

and needs but the single shade of murder to complete the dismal and sickly picture.

Answering the argument that a duellist feels no malice, the preacher replies:

Be it so. Malice, indeed, is murder in principle. But there may be murder in reason, and in fact, when there is no malice. Some other unwarrantable passion or principle may lead to the unlawful taking of human life. The highwayman who cuts the throat and rifles the pockets of the passing traveller, feels no malice.

Exposing the absurdity of the appeal to arms as a means of settlement, the preacher describes two duellists go forth to their sanguinary combat:

The offender accepts the challenge. The time is fixed. The place is agreed upon. The circumstances, with an air of solemn mania, are arranged; and the principals, with their seconds and surgeons, retire under the covers of some solitary hill, or upon the margin of some unfrequented beach, to settle this important question of honour, by stabbing or shooting at each other. One or the other, or both the parties, fall in this polite and gentleman-like contest. And what does this prove? It proves that one or the other, or both of them, as the case may be, are marksmen. But it affords no evidence that either of them possess honour, probity or talent. It is true that, he who falls in single combat has the honour of being murdered; and he who takes his life, the honour of a murderer.

In a great passage, the preacher describes the inner debate in the mind of Alexander Hamilton after he has received the challenge from Burr, and how against the

promptings of his conscience, the principles which he held, and the consideration of his wife and children, Hamilton permitted the tyranny of a social custom to lead him to his death. Hamilton's own son had fallen in a duel on those same heights at Weehawken not long before, and the preacher summons the spectre of that fallen son to plead with his father.

As a hero, as a statesman, as a patriot, Hamilton lived nobly; and would to God I could add, he nobly fell. Unwilling to admit his error in this respect, I go back to the period of discussion. I see him resisting the threatened interview. I imagine myself present in his chamber. Various reasons, for a time, seem to hold his determination in arrest. Various and moving objects pass before him, and speak a dissuasive language. His country, which may need his counsels to guide, and his arm to defend, utters her veto. The partner of his youth, already covered with weeds, and whose tears flow down into her bosom, intercedes! His babes, stretching out their little hands and pointing to a weeping mother, with lisping eloquence, but eloquence which reaches a parent's heart, cry out, " Stay, stay, dear papa, and live for us! "

In the meantime, the spectre of a fallen son, pale and ghastly, approaches, opens his bleeding bosom, and as the harbinger of death, points to the yawning tomb, and warns a hesitating father of the issue! He pauses: reviews these sad objects: and reasons on the subject. I admire his magnanimity, I approve his reasoning, and I wait to hear him reject, with indignation, the murderous proposition, and to see him spurn from his presence the presumptuous bearer of it. But I wait in vain. It was a moment in which his great wisdom forsook him—a moment in which Hamilton was not himself. He yielded to the force of an imperious custom: and yielding, he sacrificed a life in which

all had an interest—and he is lost—lost to his country, lost to his family, lost to us.

Eliphalet Nott had not read his Shakespeare in vain, and Mark Antony, holding up the bloody and dagger-rent mantle of Julius Cæsar before the people, rises to one's mind as the preacher appeals to justice by the body of the fallen statesman.

I would uncover the breathless corpse of Hamilton—I would lift from his gaping wound, his bloody mantle—I would hold it up to heaven before them, and I would ask, in the name of God, I would ask, whether at the sight of it, they felt no compunction?

With great pathos and beauty, Nott gives an account of the last hours of Hamilton. His confession of faith in the mercy of God in Christ, and his farewell message to his fellow-men, which was as follows:

Mortals! hastening to the tomb, and once the companions of my pilgrimage, take warning, and avoid my errors; cultivate the virtues I have recommended; choose the Saviour I have chosen: live disinterestedly; live for immortality, and would you rescue anything from final dissolution, lay it up in God.

The best known passage in this great sermon is that which commences with an apostrophe to the shores of Hoboken. This is the real climax to one of the great achievements in the history of pulpit effort:

Ah! ye tragic shores of Hoboken, crimsoned with the richest blood, I tremble at the crimes you record against

us—the annual register of murders which you keep and send up to God! Place of inhuman cruelty! beyond the limits of reason, of duty and of religion, where man assumes a more barbarous nature, and ceases to be man. What poignant, lingering sorrows do thy lawless combats occasion to surviving relatives! Ye who have hearts of pity—ye who have experienced the anguish of dissolving friendship—who have wept, and still weep, over the mouldering ruins of departed kindred, ye can enter into this reflection.

O thou disconsolate widow! robbed, so cruelly robbed, and in so short a time, both of a husband and a son, what must be the plenitude of thy sufferings! Could we approach thee, gladly would we drop the tear of sympathy, and pour into thy bleeding bosom the balm of consolation! But how could we comfort her whom God hath not comforted? To His throne, let us lift up our voice and weep. O God! if Thou art still the widow's husband, and the father of the fatherless, if in the fulness of Thy goodness there be yet mercies in store for miserable mortals, pity, oh pity this afflicted mother, and grant that her hapless orphans may find a friend, a benefactor, a father, in Thee! On this article I have done: may God add His blessing.

It is interesting to turn from the noble lament of Eliphalet Nott to the sermon on *Duelling* by Lyman Beecher. It was preached before the Presbytery of Long Island, meeting at Aquebogue, April 16, 1806. Beecher was then pastor of the Presbyterian Church at East Hampton, a small secluded place, even in the American world of that day. Yet from the young and unknown preacher, and his remote and humble church, there sounded forth a voice which rang throughout the nation.

In his day, Lyman Beecher was, perhaps, the most

celebrated preacher in America. John Todd, who, when a student at Yale, came in contact with him, wrote of him:

> Lyman Beecher was a thunderbolt. You never knew where it would strike, but you never saw him rise to speak without feeling that so much electricity must strike. I have never yet met the man in whose presence, whenever I met him, I always felt so small, as in his. Settled in an obscure corner, remote from all the world, he soon burst out in his sermons on *Duelling,* and *The Government of God Desirable,* with a power that startled the land. There was an inward spring that drove the machine with a power often sublime, always effective, and wonderful in results.

The sermon was based on Isaiah 59:14, 15—"*And judgment is turned away backward; and justice standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the street and equity cannot enter.*" Nott's Hamilton sermon is more of the nature of a grand threnody or elegy in prose, whereas that by Beecher is a direct appeal for the registering of public opinion, in a practical and effective manner. The appeal consists in a statement of the reasons why the citizens of the country should not elect men to office who fought duels, or countenanced duelling in others. Beecher's argument was, that by refusing to elect to office men who had fought a duel, or countenanced the practice, the then existing statutes against duelling would be enforced, duellists would be stigmatized as men who broke both the law of God and the law of the commonwealth, and political proscription would do much to abolish the wicked practice.

The preacher gives twelve reasons which should

"induce every man to withhold his vote from any person who has fought or aided in fighting a duel." The first reason is that civil government is a divine ordinance, and that while the forms thereof are left to the discretion of men, the character of rulers God has Himself prescribed:

> When arrested by the fatal challenge, no plea of reverence for God, of respect for human law, of conscience, of innocency, absence of anger, actual friendship, affection to parents, wife or children, the hope of heaven or fear of hell, is for one moment admitted. All obligations are cancelled, all ties are burst asunder; all consequences are disregarded.

Among other reasons are the following: That the duellist is a murderer; that he cannot be entrusted with the welfare of the community, because he can give no pledge to the people, his religious principle being nothing and his moral principle nothing; that it is inconsistent to vote for duellists for public office, for in so doing patronage is given a criminal, who in law is doomed to die. "With one hand we erect a gallows, with the other rescue the victim; with one breath declare him unfit to live, with the next constitute him guardian of our rights. Cancel, I beseech you, the laws against duelling, annihilate your criminal code, level to the ground your prisons and restore to the sweets of society, and embraces of charity, their more innocent victims. Be consistent. If you tolerate one set of villains, tolerate them all; if murder does not stagger your confidence, let it not waver at inferior crimes."

Scorning the duellist's appeal to a code of honour, Beecher said:

He may contemn the Saviour of men, and hate and oppose the religion of his country. He may be a Julian in bitterness, and, by swearing, cause the earth to mourn; in passion, a whirlwind; in cruelty to tenants, servants, and to his family, a tiger. He may be a gambler, a prodigal, a fornicator, an adulterer, a drunkard, a murderer, and not violate the laws of honour. Nay, honour not only tolerates crime, but, in many instances, it is the direct and only temptation to crime.

What has torn yonder wretches from the embraces of their wives and their children, and driven them to the field of blood—to the confines of hell? What nerves those arms, rising to sport with life and heaven? It is honour; the pledge of patriotism, the evidence of rectitude. Ah, it is done! The blood streams, and the victim welters on the ground. And see the victor coward running from the field, and, for a few days, like Cain, a fugitive and a vagabond until the first burst of indignation has passed, and the hand of time has soothed the outraged sensibility of the community; then publicly and as if to add insult to injustice, returning to *offer his services, and to pledge his honour,* that *your* lives, and *your* rights shall be safe in his hand.

Answering the argument, that the duellist has only followed the leading of his education and code of thinking, and therefore is not deficient in principle, religious or moral, Beecher said:

In plain language, because the duellist is *educated* a duellist, the crime of wilful murder in him is very small, and is consistent with religious and moral principle. If men, then, are only educated to thieving, assassination, and

robbery—if, by habit and false reasoning, they are so familiarized to crime as to rob, and steal, and destroy life, without much consciousness of guilt—then, indeed, they are *very honest men* and are fit to superintend the affairs of the nation!

Calling upon the duellists to restrain themselves and their angry passions, as other members of society are required to do, the preacher said:

And if they will not take the trouble to govern their temper—if they will not encounter the self-denial which the laws of God and man inculcate—if they will be savages in a civilized land—let them be treated as savages. And when they murder, elevate them to the gallows, and not to posts of honour.

Evidently at that early day, men tried to silence courageous preachers by telling them that they were interfering in matters with which they had nothing to do, or that their preaching was political, and not the Gospel, for towards the close of the sermon, Beecher says:

It is vain to cry out "priestcraft," "political preaching;" these watchwords will not answer here. The crime we oppose is peculiar to no party; it is common to all. It is a crime too horrid to be palliated, too threatening to be longer endured in officers of government. If we may not denounce duelling because men of political eminence are guilty of the crime—because the enlightening of the consciences of our people would affect an election—every crime would soon find a sanctuary in the example of some great politician; our mouths would be shut; we might not whisper the guilt of crimes, lest, by awakening your consciences, it should produce some political effect.

Warning the people that God's judgment will descend upon the nation which tolerates murder, Beecher reaches one of his great climaxes:

Duelling is a great national sin; with the exception of a small section of the Union, the whole land is defiled with blood. From the lakes of the north to the plains of Georgia, is heard the voice of lamentation and woe—the cries of the widow and the fatherless. This work of desolation is performed often by men in office, by the appointed guardians of life and liberty. On the floor of Congress, challenges have been threatened, if not given; and thus powder and ball have been introduced as the auxiliaries of deliberation and argument. Oh, tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon! Alas! it is too late to conceal our infamy; the sun hath shined on our guilt, and the eye of God with brighter beams surveys the whole. He beholds, and he will punish. His quiver is full of arrows, his sword is impatient of confinement; ten thousand plagues stand ready to execute his wrath; conflagration, tempest, earthquake, war, famine, and pestilence, wait his command only, to cleanse the land from blood—to involve in one common ruin both the murderer and those who tolerate his crimes.

Atheists may scoff, but there is a God—a God who governs the earth in righteousness—an avenger of crimes, the supporter and destroyer of nations. And as clay is in the hand of the potter, so are the nations of the earth in the hand of God. At what instant He speaks concerning a nation, to pluck up, to pull down, and destroy it, if that nation repent, God will avert the impending judgment. And at what instant He shall speak concerning a nation, to build and to plant it, if it do evil in His sight, He will arrest the intended blessing, and send forth judgments in its stead. Be not deceived: the greater our present mercies and seeming security, the greater is the guilt of our rebellion, and the more certain, swift, and awful, will be our calamity.

We are murderers, a nation of murderers, while we tolerate and reward the perpetrators of the crime. *And shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?*

At the very end of his sermon, the preacher makes a telling appeal to the personal feelings of those who hear or read his sermon:

Had you beheld a dying father conveyed, bleeding and agonizing, to his distracted family—had you heard their piercing shrieks and witnessed their frantic agony—would you reward the savage man who had plunged them in distress? Had the duellist destroyed your neighbour—had your own father been killed by the man who solicits your suffrage—had your son, laid low by his hand, been brought to your door pale in death and weltering in blood—would you then think the crime a small one?

Every year the duellist is cutting down the neighbour of somebody. Every year, and many times in the year, a father is brought dead or dying to his family, or a son laid breathless at the feet of his parents; and every year you are patronizing by your votes the men who commit these crimes, and looking with cold indifference upon, and even mocking, the sorrows of your neighbour. Beware—I admonish you to beware, and especially such of you as have promising sons preparing for active life—lest, having no feeling for the sorrows of another, you be called to weep for your own sorrow; lest your sons fall by the hand of the very murderer for whom you vote, or by the hand of some one whom his example has trained to the work of blood!

The interesting history of this famous sermon, how it came to be preached, how it was lost, recovered, and finally published, is related by the preacher, in his

Autobiography. Like the entire American public, Beecher was profoundly stirred by the death of Alexander Hamilton.

> When I read about it in the paper, he says, a feeling of indignation was roused within me. I kept thinking and thinking, and my indignation did not go to sleep. It kept working and working and finally I began to write. No human being knew what I was thinking and feeling; nor had any agency in setting me at work. It was the duel, and myself, and God that produced that sermon.

Beecher worked at the sermon, on and off, for six months, and then preached it to his own congregation at East Hampton, Long Island, and in a number of the surrounding villages "to see how it would sound." On April 16, 1806, he preached it before the Presbytery at Aquebogue, Long Island. Its members were amazed at his boldness, but all admired the sermon and thought it should be printed. Beecher then began to revise and polish it for publication. In order to get the criticism of some one of literary discernment, he sent the sermon to a John Lyon Gardiner, of Gardiner's Island. After reading it, Gardiner gave it to a neighbour to take across the Sound to Beecher at East Hampton. The man put the sermon in the pocket of his pea-jacket, and, in the middle of the bay, warm with rowing, he threw off his coat and the sermon fell into the water. Afterwards, the man remembered hearing something splash, but did not notice it at the time. Beecher was thunderstruck when he learned the fate of his much-laboured sermon, and was depressed

at the "doleful prospect, after working over it so long, and reading all the finishings-off" to his wife and her sister, Mary Hubbard. He engaged Gardiner's hired hands to watch the beach, if perchance the sermon had come ashore, offering five dollars to the man who found it. The sequel is best related in his own words:

> One day, a month after, I was at home cutting wood, when I spied a fellow running toward me, swinging something in the air, and grinning so that I could see his teeth, fifteen rods away. There was my sermon, like Moses from the bulrushes! They had wrapped it in paper and wound it round with yarn so closely that it was dry inside. As Providence had ordered it, a heavy storm and high tide had set in, on the night it was lost, and lodged it high and dry about a hundred rods from our landing-place, above high-water mark.

After some local circulation in the towns at the end of Long Island, the sermon found its way to New York, and was reviewed by the organizers of an association against duelling. Not long afterwards, Beecher introduced a resolution advocating the formation of societies against duelling at a meeting of the Presbyterian Synod, at Newark, New Jersey. The resolution, strange as it may seem, raised a great storm, but Beecher defended it in a powerful speech, of which he says:

> Never made an argument so short, strong and pointed in my life. I shall never forget it. There was a large body; house full; my opponent, a D.D.; and I was only thirty, a young man nobody had ever heard of. I shall never forget

the looks of Dr. Miller after I began to let off. He put on his spectacles, came round till he got right opposite to where I stood, and there he stared at me with perfect amazement. Oh, I declare! if I did not switch 'em and scorch 'em and stamp on 'em! It swept all before it."

This epeech made as great an impression as the sermon itself, and carried Beecher's name everywhere. When Henry Clay, who had fought several duels, ran for the Presidency, the Democrats printed an edition of forty thousand copies of Beecher's sermon, and scattered them all over the country. "The sermon," wrote Dr. Bacon, "hung like a millstone around the neck of Henry Clay."

X

LYMAN BEECHER

A GREAT PREACHER AND TEMPERANCE

ON a bright October day in 1775, Esther Lyman, the third and best beloved wife of a five-times married New Haven blacksmith, gave birth to a seven-months child. Two days after, she died of consumption. The attending woman, seeing that the mother could not live, and that the infant was so puny a thing, wrapped it up and laid it aside, thinking it useless to try to keep the child alive. But another of the women took a look at the package to see if the babe was alive. Finding the child still alive, she washed and dressed it, saying as she did so, " It's a pity it hadn't died with the mother."

If that second woman had not taken a look at the parcel in which the supposedly dying infant was wrapped, Lyman Beecher would never had shaken New England with his sermons on duelling and temperance, and the world would never have heard of Henry Ward Beecher, or wept over the pages of *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* written by Harriet Beecher. Upon the hinges of what little happening turn mighty issues! A midwife takes a look into a parcel, rather hoping to find it contains a dead babe. But the babe

was alive, and, like Moses in the Nile, wept, and that wail gave to America Lyman Beecher, with his seven sons, all ministers of the Gospel, and his two distinguished daughters, Harriet and Catherine Esther.

A graduate of Yale College, in 1797, Lyman Beecher was installed pastor of the Presbyterian Church at East Hampton, Long Island, and afterwards of the Congregational Church at Litchfield, Connecticut; in 1826, he became pastor of the Hanover Street Church, Boston, Massachusetts, and, in 1832, president of the newly established Lane Theological Seminary at Cincinnati. In New England he had been the powerful and eloquent champion of evangelical Christianity, as opposed to Unitarianism. Now, in going to Cincinnati, in that day the capital of the West, Beecher's purpose was to save the empire of the West for Protestantism. He was thrilled by the grandeur of his enterprise, and his whole remarkable family shared his enthusiasm. In 1836, being regarded as a "moderate" Calvinist, Beecher was tried for heresy by the Presbytery of Cincinnati, but acquitted. This was about the time of the Old and New School schism in the Presbyterian Church, one of the underlying causes of which was the agitation over slavery.

Although an enemy of slavery, Beecher was not altogether in sympathy with the Abolitionists. He said:

> I regard the whole Abolition movement, under its most influential leaders, with its distinctive maxims and modes of feeling, and also the whole temper, principles and action of the South in justification of slavery, as a singular in-

stance of infatuation permitted by Heaven for purposes of national retribution. God never raised up such men as Garrison, and others like him as the ministers of His mercy for purposes of peaceful reform, but only as the fit and fearful ministers of His vengeance, upon a people incorrigibly wicked.

In 1814, when pastor of the Congregational Church at Litchfield, Connecticut, Lyman Beecher, whose sermon against duelling had carried his name through the nation, lifted up his voice in a series of six memorable sermons against the sin of intemperance. Two of the sermons are on Proverbs 23:29, 30—"*Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine;*" and four are on Habakkuk 2:9, 11—"*Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house. . . . For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.*" In these sermons against intemperance, Lyman Beecher again sounds the note of an appeal for the enlightenment and expression of public opinion, which he had sounded in his famous sermon against duelling. No temperance society or prohibition organization could do better than to publish the six sermons preached by Beecher at Litchfield, one hundred and fifteen years ago. Every argument against strong drink, social and national, religious and civil, physical, mental, and moral, is set forth with a power of logic and a sweep of eloquence, upon which it would be impossible to improve, in our own day and

generation. Beecher commences his sermon with this declaration:

> Intemperance is the sin of our land, and without boundless prosperity, is coming in upon us like a flood, and if anything shall defeat the hopes of the world which hang upon our experiment of civil liberty, it is that river of fire which is rolling through the land destroying the vital air and extending around an atmosphere of death.

Then he proceeds to describe the effect of drinking, whether moderately or to excess, upon the body. Reading these pages, one would think that Beecher had in his hands the most recent pamphlet of our day, giving the latest investigations as to the ravages of liquor in the body. "If all diseases," he says, "which terminate in death could speak out of the grave or tell their origin upon the coffin lid, we should witness the most appalling and unexpected disclosures."

As for opposition to measures for the suppression of intemperance, Beecher states a biting truth which is just as applicable today as it was when first uttered:

> Those persons who find themselves for some cause always irritated, when efforts are made to suppress intemperance and moved by some instinctive impulse to make opposition, ought to examine instantly whether the love of spirits is not the cause of it. An aged country merchant of an acute mind and sterling reputation once said to me: "I never knew an attempt made to suppress intemperance which was not opposed by some persons from whom I should not have expected opposition, and I never failed to find first or last that these persons were themselves implicated in the sin."

Temperate men seldom, if ever, oppose the reformation of intemperance.

Dealing with what he calls the argument about the moderate use of ardent spirits, the preacher says:

We might as well speak of the moderate use of the plague, of fire handed prudently among powder; of poison taken prudently every day; or vipers and serpents introduced prudently into our dwellings to glide about as a matter of courtesy to visitors and of amusement to our children.

The present-day advocates of light wines and beers will find that Beecher answered their arguments a century ago when he said:

Strong beer has been recommended as the substitute for ardent spirits. But though it may not create intemperance habits as soon, it has no power to allay them. It would even finish what ardent spirits have begun, and with this difference only, that it does not rasp the vital organs with quite so keen a file, and enables the victim to come to his grave by a course somewhat more dilatory, and with more of a good-natured stupidity of the idiot and less of the demoniac frenzy of the mad-man. Wine has been prescribed as a means of decoying the intemperate from the ways of death, but habit cannot be thus cheated out of its dominion or ravening appetite be amused down to a sober and temperate demand.

If in any instance, wine suffices to complete the work of ruin, then the difference is only that the victim is stretched longer upon the rack to die in torture with the gout while ardent spirits finish life by a shorter and perhaps less painful course. Retrenchments and substitutes are idle. It is the tampering of an infant with a giant, the effort of a

kitten to escape from the paws of a lion. There is no remedy for intemperance but the cessation of it.

In the third sermon the preacher deals with intemperance as an enemy of national life, and declares: "As the jackal follows the lion to prey upon the slain, so do disease and death wait on the footsteps of inebriation."

In the last sermon of the series, Beecher takes up the question of a practical remedy. Perhaps the best comment on these sermons is to say, that everything advocated by Beecher has long since been adopted. His first principle was "to extend universal information on the subject of intemperance, its nature, causes, evils and remedy may be universally made known. Every pulpit and every newspaper in the land may be put in requisition to give line upon line on this subject until it is done."

Together with this dissemination of knowledge, Beecher advocates the formation of an administrative association, the special purpose of which was to be "the superintending of this great subject, whose untiring energies shall be exerted in sending out agents to pass through the land; the collection of information; the conferring with influential individuals and bodies of men; the delivering of addresses at popular meetings; the formation of societies, as auxiliaries to the parent institution. This not only may be done, but I am persuaded *will* be done, before another year shall have passed away."

Very soon after these addresses were delivered, the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance

was established. It has had many successors, and today the most notable and effective of them is the Anti-Saloon League. Although Beecher advocates general prohibition, he makes it clear, however, that such legislation will be unavailing, unless accompanied by a correct and efficient public sentiment. He therefore declared the universal natural and national remedy for intemperance to be:

> The banishment of ardent spirits from the list of lawful articles of commerce, by a correct and efficient public sentiment; such as has turned slavery out of half our land, and will yet expel it from the world.

These sermons are marked by the grip of their logic, the clearness of their statements, the impact of their periods, and the thrill of their illustrations. As an example of this thrill of illustration, I quote a passage from the last sermon of the series, in which Beecher appeals to fathers, to guard their children from the curse of strong drink:

> Should a serpent of vast dimensions surprise, in the field, one of your little brood, and wreath about his body its cold, elastic folds, tightening with every yielding breath its deadly grip—how would his cries pierce your soul, and his strained eyeballs and convulsive agonies and imploring hands add wings to your feet and supernatural strength to your arms!
>
> But in this case you could approach with hope to his rescue. The keen edge of steel might sunder the elastic fold, and rescue the victim, who, the moment he is released, breathes freely and is well again. But the serpent intemperance twines about the body of your child a deadlier grip, and extorts a keener cry of distress, and mocks your efforts

to relieve him by a fibre which no steel can sunder. Like Laocoon, you can only look on, while bone after bone of your child is crushed, till his agonies are over and his cries are hushed in death.

Another tremendous passage is that wherein the great preacher peoples a dwelling built by the trade in or the profit from strong drink with the ghosts of its victims:

If, in every dwelling built by blood, the stone from the wall should utter all the cries which the bloody traffic extorts, and the beam out of the timber should echo them back, who would build such a house, and who would dwell in it? What if in every part of the dwelling, from the cellar upward, through all the halls and chambers, babblings and contentions and voices and groans and shrieks and wailings were heard day and night! What if the cold blood oozed out, and stood in drops upon the walls; and, by preternatural art, all the ghastly skulls and bones of the victims destroyed by intemperance should stand upon the walls in horrid sculpture, within and without the building! Who would rear such a building?

In the fifth sermon, an argument is advanced for the outlawing of the traffic in strong drink, because of the suffering and mortality inseparable from such commerce. Here Beecher strikes his grandest note as he describes the woe and suffering brought to all classes of men by liquor:

There never was a Molech to whom were immolated yearly as many children as are immolated or kept in a state of constant suffering in this land of nominal Christianity. We have no drums and gongs to drown their

cries, neither do we make convocations and bring them all out for one mighty burning. The fires which consume them are slow fires, and they blaze balefully in every part of our land, throughout which the cries of injured children and orphans go up to heaven.

We are appalled and shocked at the accounts from the East, of widows burned upon the funeral piles of their departed husbands. But what if those devotees of superstition, the Brahmins, had discovered a mode of prolonging the lives of the victims for years amid the flames, and by those protracted burnings were accustomed to torture life away? We might almost rouse up a crusade to cross the deep, to stop by force such inhumanity. But, alas, we should leave behind us on our own shores more wives in the fire, than we should find of widows thus sacrificed in all the East—a fire, too, which, besides its action upon the body, tortures the soul by lost affections and ruined hopes and prospective wretchedness.

We have heard of the horrors of the middle passage, the transportation of slaves, the chains, the darkness, the stench, the mortality, and living madness of woe, and it is dreadful. But bring together the victims of intemperance, and crowd them into one vast lazar-house, and sights of woe quite as appalling would meet your eyes.

Yes, in this nation there is a " middle passage " of slavery and darkness, of chains, and disease, and death. But it is a middle passage, not from Africa to America, but from time to eternity, and not of slaves whom death will release from suffering, but of those whose sufferings at death do but just begin. Could all the sights of these captives be wafted on one breeze, it would be loud as thunder. Could all their tears be assembled, they would be like unto the sea.

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